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Ballads of the  
English Reformation



Rev. Horace Noel

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Ballads of the English Reformation.



MARTYRDOM OF RIDLEY AND LATIMER.

*(From Foxe's "Book of Martyrs.")*

*With the author's affectionate regards.*

# BALLADS

OF THE

# ENGLISH REFORMATION

BY

HORACE NOEL, M.A.



“Buy the truth, and sell it not.”—PROVERBS xxiii. 23.



THE RELIGIOUS TRACT SOCIETY:  
56, PATERNOSTER ROW; 65, ST. PAUL'S CHURCHYARD;  
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## P R E F A C E .



**O**F the five ballads contained in the following pages, those of John Brown's martyrdom and Hugh Latimer are the only ones in which I have taken leave to draw upon my imagination. The others are simply versified history. And in the case of the two where I have employed a certain amount of fiction, I have followed, nevertheless, the facts of history so far as they go, as the reader may see by referring to the Notes.

I would bespeak an indulgent criticism for these verses, on the plea that a writer of ballads is not bound to achieve a high poetic flight. I conceive that the cadence of metre will of itself do something to heighten the effect of a striking narrative; and that, for this reason alone, it is worth while to versify a tale which one would have to abide in the memory and heart of the reader.

These are surely days in which we ought to keep alive the remembrance of the heroic combatants

in the struggle which led to the emancipation of England from the Papal yoke. To remember their doings and sufferings is a debt of gratitude to them, and still more to the God whose grace was glorified in them, and who made use of them in bestowing priceless blessings on this nation. Far be it from us to nurture feelings of bitterness and contempt in regard to our Roman Catholic fellow-countrymen; but at the same time let us not offend God by despising the great deliverance which He has accomplished for us.

Too many English men and women are acting over again the part which Israel played at Kadesh, when they said, "Let us make a leader, and let us return to Egypt." And the preference of error, by those into whose hands God has put the truth, is a sin which may well awaken forebodings for the future of this land.

May it please God to use this little work as a means of leading some at least of its readers to appreciate more highly, and hold more firmly, against all who would wrest it from them, the inestimable treasure of the Gospel of Christ.





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## JOHN WICKLIFF.



**W**ATCHING on the wild Atlantic, oft the seaman's  
weary eye  
Scans the distant lights of heaven spangling the  
unfathomed sky.  
If, through eastern vapours breaking, gleams at  
length a stronger ray,  
Glad he hails the star of morning, herald of the  
wished-for day.  
Rising still, she glows the brighter, queen amid the  
host of night ;  
Till behind her comes the dawning, and the  
monarch of the light.  
Like that morning star for lustre, bright amidst a  
gloomy age,  
Shines the noble name of Wickliff<sup>1</sup> on the sad  
historian's page.

<sup>1</sup> Note *A* (*Appendix*).



Like that dreary sea was England, now five  
hundred years ago ;  
Dark for want of heavenly knowledge, tossed with  
storms of strife and woe.  
Much did England grieve the Spirit of the God  
of peace and love,  
Viewing earth's disordered nations from His holy  
courts above ;  
But she pleased the haughty rulers, who, with  
princes at their feet,  
Reared a prouder throne than Cæsar's on the  
wreck of Cæsar's seat.  
Poor were England's hills<sup>1</sup> and valleys, yet they  
yielded much increase  
To the shepherds who, by thousands, starved the  
flock yet loved the fleece.  
Priests and prelates, monks and friars, clipped the  
wool with jealous care,  
Whilst their chief, the three-crowned pontiff,  
claimed and took a royal share ;  
And the people, sinning blindly,<sup>2</sup> wandered on in  
death's dark way,  
As in wild wolf-haunted forests, helpless sheep  
all gone astray.  
But the Lord preserves a remnant, whom He  
numbers as His own,<sup>3</sup>  
E'en when Satan's power is highest, e'en in blood-  
stained Babylon.

<sup>1</sup> Note *B*.<sup>2</sup> Note *C*.<sup>3</sup> Note *D*.

Such was in his day John Wickliff ; priest of Rome,  
yet good and true ;  
Loving well the Holy Scripture, boldly teaching  
what he knew.

Oxford nursed his rising spirit ; not as now, that  
stately dame,  
Grey with age, and rich in learning : Oxford then  
was young in fame.

Youthful too in understanding : as the inex-  
perienced child  
Knows not worthless glass from diamonds, so her  
senses were beguiled.

Over prophets and apostles schoolmen<sup>1</sup> held the  
honoured seat ;  
Aristotle had the glory which for Jesus Christ was  
meet.

On those barren - heights of learning Wickliff  
reached a lofty place ;  
But a greater Teacher met him, showing him the  
paths of grace.

So his joyful eyes were opened, and the Book by  
others scorned  
Shone before him, with the radiance of celestial  
truth adorned.

Good from evil, truth from error, by its light he  
well discerned ;

From its words of Gospel-promise faith in God  
and Christ he learned.

<sup>1</sup> Note *E*.

Then to meet the powers of darkness, armed and  
trained, he took the field ;  
Scripture was his sword so piercing, hope his  
helmet, faith his shield.  
As the Head of all the prophets, Shepherd of  
Jeshurun's tribes,  
Tore the mask from crafty hirelings, priests and  
pharisees and scribes,  
So did Wickliff<sup>1</sup> warn the people. "Be not ye  
deceived," said he.  
"Pardon is not bought for money ; God's forgiving  
grace is free.  
Vainly priests beside their altars for your guilty  
souls will sing,  
Vain to buy the Pope's indulgence, no remission  
will it bring.  
Vainly do the friars shrive you, if your sins yet  
hold their sway ;  
If ye turn with true repentance, not a penny need  
ye pay.  
Ask no saintly mediation, ye who seek the Father's  
face :  
Jesus is our intercessor, full of gentleness and  
grace.  
Fear not binding, crave not loosing, ye who love  
God's holy law,  
From the men whose fleecy covering fails to hide  
the felon paw.

<sup>1</sup> Note *F*.



Though the Pope may roll his thunders, let not  
England bend her knee :  
Wrongfully he claims her tribute, falsely boasts  
her lord to be.  
Jesus Christ was meek and lowly, lowly His  
apostles were ;  
Falsely does yon proud usurper call himself their  
follower."

Words like these he had not spoken had he sought  
a quiet life ;  
Men of peace, God's message bearing, must prepare  
for days of strife.  
Now in London's high cathedral see the prelates  
sit in state ;  
Called before their dread tribunal, Wickliff comes  
to meet his fate.  
But the God he served will ever for His children's  
need provide ;  
John of Gaunt and lordly Percy stoutly stood on  
Wickliff's side.  
Courtney, high by birth and office, faced them  
boldly : and the clang  
Loud arose of tongues contending, till the echoing  
arches rang.  
Then the storm brake forth in London ; princely  
Gaunt its fury fled ;  
But the Lord His shield extended o'er John  
Wickliff's faithful head.

Yet the battle was not ended ; for a greater foe  
was stirred,

When the blast of Wickliff's trumpet from the  
Papal gate was heard.

As upon the son of Jesse tall Goliath fixed his  
frown,

So the Pontiff eyed the Briton, and his thunder-  
bolts came down.

"England's glory is departing," thus the stern  
epistles ran ;

"Wickliff's doctrine stains her lustre : seize upon  
the impious man."

Oxford, though the Pope commanded, scarce  
would yield her honoured son ;

Yet at length he comes to Lambeth, surely now  
his course is run.

Doubtless they that seek his downfall now may  
count the battle won.

But, like Galilean waters which the word of Jesus  
quelled,

So, by His protecting mercy, see the foe again  
repelled.

For the outcry of the people bade the hot pursuit  
to stay,

And Johanna's royal mandate barred the hunters  
of their prey ;

Wickliff's task was yet unfinished ; no man might  
curtail his day.

From the lion's mouth delivered, back the faithful  
shepherd turns :  
Seeks the flock ; to stay whose famine deeply his  
compassion burns.  
Straightway then, divinely guided, goes he to the  
ancient floors,  
Where the food, which God's true servants heaped  
of old in goodly stores,  
Long withheld by Satan's agents, lay within close-  
fastened doors.  
There, the Latin lock removing,<sup>1</sup> brought he forth  
the wholesome Word,  
In the home-born tongue which each one in his  
mother's arms first heard.  
"Let the people have the Scripture, let them study  
it," he cried ;  
"Not by God's commandment is it to the simple  
folk denied.  
Antichrists are they who say so : teachers in that  
sinful school,  
Where, instead of God's pure precept, man's  
tradition is the rule."  
So the truths which first resounded on the hills of  
Galilee,  
And within the Temple's porches, now, in accents  
clear and free,  
Wakened slumbering souls in England, as the  
breeze awakes the sea.

<sup>1</sup> Note G.

Thus through days of gloom and danger Wickliff  
fought and toiled amain,  
Serving Him whose loyal servants labour not, nor  
strive, in vain.  
Many scorned him, many cared not, but a faithful  
few were found,  
Hearts which, by the Spirit opened, heard with  
joy the Gospel sound.  
Volunteers for holy warfare<sup>1</sup> rose when Wickliff's  
flag appeared,  
Men who clave to truth and virtue, hated sin, and  
God revered.  
Good Queen Anne,<sup>2</sup> Bohemia's daughter, shares  
with them this lofty fame,  
And Bohemia, linked with England, caught from  
hence the sacred flame.  
Thither borne, the words of Wickliff found in  
kindred hearts their soil,  
And the blazing piles of Constance<sup>3</sup> told of  
Wickliff's fruitful toil.  
Huss and Jerome lay in ashes, but new witnesses  
arose ;  
Still the tree by Wickliff planted in Slavonia's  
forest grows.  
Though the axe of persecution lopped the boughs,  
yet lived the root :  
Thence thy rod, Moravia, blossomed, and hath  
strewn the world with fruit.

<sup>1</sup> Note *H*.<sup>2</sup> Note *I*.<sup>3</sup> Note *J*.

Hark! what means that sound from Oxford?  
Wickliff there is closely pressed;  
Rome's chief idol he hath smitten; well may he  
expect no rest.  
Go within yon lofty temple; mark the crowd on  
bended knee;  
Wouldst thou view the god they worship? not in  
god-like form is he;  
For that small round thing thou seest,<sup>1</sup> held by  
human hands on high,  
Is, say they, the King of Glory, Monarch of the  
earth and sky.  
Bread it was, but is no longer; for the priest hath  
said the word,  
Now thou must bow down before it, as thy very  
God and Lord.  
Thus may sinners trade with sinners in the flesh  
which Mary bore;  
Thus may mortals make their Maker, thus they  
eat what they adore.  
Wickliff dares teach other doctrine,<sup>2</sup> hence that  
growing cloud of wrath;  
Gaunt now fails him, Courtney conquers, and from  
Oxford casts him forth.  
Lutterworth remains his shelter: there he still,  
with patient breast,  
Fed the flock, until his Master called the brave  
old man to rest.

Note *K*.<sup>2</sup> Note *L*.



Yet when dead he ceased not speaking ; for his  
writings gave their voice,  
And his Bible, grace-proclaiming, bade the contrite  
heart rejoice.

Branded with the name of Lollard,<sup>1</sup> long reproach  
his followers bore :

Long the lords of this world's darkness vexed  
them with oppression sore,  
Courtney,<sup>2</sup> Arundel, and Chicheley, led in turn the  
eager chase.

Many yielded ; some, unflinching, faced the fire,  
sustained by grace.

Sawtry, Badby, high-born Cobham, won through  
flames the victor's crown ;

Nor let Kent forget how nobly died her martyr,  
brave John Brown.

Long it were to tell the story of the men who  
strove this strife,

Foxe's page on earth records them, and in heaven  
the book of life.

Six-score years the race of Lollards, still down-  
trodden, still up-sprang,

Till the day when startled Europe loud with  
Luther's clarion rang.

<sup>1</sup> Note *M*.

<sup>2</sup> Note *N*.



---

God be praised that we in sunshine, by His providence bestowed,  
Reap the harvest which our fathers in the stormy tempest sowed.  
Yet remember, thankless England, ere God take His gifts away,  
That for mercies scorned and slighted, comes at last a reckoning day.  
When the Lord hath shined upon thee, in His Word's celestial light,  
Wilt thou turn to man's tradition, seek again the shades of night?  
Wilt thou blot from thy remembrance what thy noblest sons endured;  
And the deeds by which thy Maker thy deliverance secured?  
Wilt thou gaze with admiration on the mystic harlot's face?  
Though the loved apostle warns thee, wilt thou share her foul disgrace?  
Shall her Babylonish raiment captivate thy carnal eye?  
Shall her cup of witchcraft cause thee senseless at her feet to lie?  
Oh, may God avert the ruin! may His Spirit keep alive  
Truth and righteousness among us, and our failing faith revive!

Turn us, God of hosts, oh, turn us, for the glory of  
Thy grace;  
Look not on our sin-stained garments, but on Thine  
Anointed's face.  
Let Thy holy Word to England still the light of  
life afford;  
That from English homes may issue sons and  
daughters to the Lord.



ENTRANCE TO LOLLARD'S TOWER.

John Brown.







JOHN BROWN,  
The Martyr of Ashford.

---

**I**N Kentish fields the Maytide sun  
Broad-casts his evening rays;  
And Ashford's tower and town give back  
The echo of his blaze.

Glow the wide vale in green and gold;  
While, clad in fainter hue,  
The swelling downs which shepherds love  
Border the northward view,

The townsfolk seek the smiling meads  
With spring-flowers spangled o'er,  
And breathe the south-west breeze which comes  
Fresh from the Sussex shore.

Yet neither breeze, nor field, nor flower,  
Can stay the falling tear  
Of one who sits in Ashford town,<sup>1</sup>  
Hard pressed by cruel fear.

“Why wears thy face so dark a veil  
Of woe, good Mistress Brown?  
What sorrow wrings thine heart, that thus  
Thy tears flow freely down?”

“Ah! friend, it is no common grief  
That lies upon my heart;  
Know'st thou not how my husband dear  
And I were forced to part?”

Long weeks have passed since from his home  
We saw him torn away:  
And where he is, or what his state,  
Alas! I cannot say.

On Sunday after Easter-tide  
To church I duly went;  
To Him who safe delivered me  
I would my thanks present.

<sup>1</sup> Note A.

Our friends we prayed to come with us,  
Our homely meal to share ;  
My husband, as the serving-man,  
Was bringing in the fare.

Our new-born babe upon my lap  
Lay peacefully and smiled ;  
And kindly wishes went around  
For mother and for child.

But oh! we know not what the day  
May have for us in store :  
One hour the sun shines bright, the next  
Hears the loud thunder roar.

While thus we sat in converse sweet,  
Nor evil did forbode,  
We heard a sound, which grew apace,  
Of riders on the road.

Our little Alice quickly to  
The window ran, and straight ;  
'Mother,' she cried, 'I see four men,  
With horses, at the gate!'

Much marvelled we what brought to us  
This company so brave ;  
But fear and sorrow speedily  
Made every face look grave.

In at the door a bailiff stepped,  
His warrant in his hand ;  
And, 'Where's John Brown?' he sternly asked ;  
'To see him I demand.'

'I am John Brown,' my husband said ;  
'If that be so,' quoth he,  
'Thou art my prisoner : so prepare  
To come along with me.'

In vain we asked the reason why :  
Our tears he would not heed ;  
But to the stable went, and thence  
Brought out our good old steed.

On his own horse they set John Brown,  
Against his will to ride ;  
And underneath, from foot to foot,  
His legs they firmly tied.

Then, like a child, by hungry wolves  
Snatched from a cottage door,  
And borne away, was he led off  
Amid those riders four.

They spurred their horses to a trot,  
And soon were out of sight ;  
And all his after-story lies  
In secrecy's sad night,

Sore grief it were to see him laid  
Beneath the grave's green sod ;  
But then I could rejoice to know  
His soul was with his God.

But now my restless fancy paints  
A thousand dismal scenes :  
This gloomy silence—who can say  
What hidden woe it means ?

Yet much I blame my want of faith ;  
For God's unfailing Word  
Hath said that all things work for good  
To them that love the Lord."

" Well, Mistress Brown, indeed thy tale  
Is pitiful to hear ;  
A widow's sorrow were, methinks,  
Scarcely so hard to bear.

Yet bear in mind that they who tore  
Thy spouse from thine embrace  
Can never tear him from that Friend  
Whose presence fills all space.

So cheer thine heart, good Bessy Brown,  
A brighter day thou'lt see :  
Thy God will be thy husband's guard,  
Thy God will care for thee."





Now, late one evening, comes a knock,  
A voice half out of breath :  
“Thy husband’s in the market-place,—  
Make haste, Elizabeth !”

With rapid steps, with trembling heart,  
Thither she hies anon ;  
And there, a prisoner in the stocks,  
She sees her long-lost John.

She falls upon his neck and weeps,  
In mingled joy and grief,  
“Oh, husband ! have I found thee thus,  
Treated like any thief ?”

“Ah ! my sweet Bess, once more I come  
To see my town, my wife,  
But heavy news for thee I bring :  
To-morrow ends my life !

But let not sorrow break thine heart ;  
Give thanks to God, that I  
For no transgression of His laws,  
But in His service die.

When night has o’er the noisy street  
The spell of silence thrown,  
Then shall my woeful tale be told  
By me to thee alone,

Fetch now my babes, that here I may  
Fold them in my embrace :  
For never more our walls within  
They'll see their father's face."



Now slumber o'er the darkened town  
Its gentle empire wins.  
Beside John Brown his sad wife sits,  
And thus his tale begins :

I told thee, as thou know'st, dear wife,  
How, when I lately sailed,  
In Easter week, upon the Thames,  
Some brief dispute I held

With one next whom upon the barge  
Heedless I took my seat :  
Who told me that I sat more nigh  
Than to his rank was meet.

"Know'st thou not," said he, "what I am?"

"No, sir," I answer made.

"A priest," quoth he, "of holy church :  
I ply no menial trade."

"And have you, sir, a parish charge?"

"Nay," said he, "no such thing :

For souls departed I'm a priest,  
And for a soul I sing."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Note B.

“Know you then, sir, where dwells that soul  
When you begin your song?”

“Nay, verily,” said he, “that’s more  
Than doth to me belong.”

“Or know you where that soul is found  
When ended is your mass?”

“I tell thee nay,” said he, “such things  
All human knowledge pass.”<sup>1</sup>

“If thus you labour in the dark,  
Though singing clear and strong,  
Some room there seems, sir priest, to doubt  
The value of your song.”

Thereat incensed, he briefly closed  
Our parley with a threat.

“Enough, thou heretic, I will  
Be even with thee yet.”

Too well, as thou anon shalt hear,  
He kept his bitter word;  
Now Gravesend hove in sight, and there  
Our vessel soon lay moored.

When once ashore, with nimble pace  
I took the homeward road;  
And the next morning reached with joy  
My dearly-loved abode.

<sup>1</sup> Note C.

Whilst he, like weasel thirsting for  
The blood of some poor hare,  
To Canterbury sped, and lodged  
My accusation there.

Thence rose the storm which suddenly  
Upon us burst that day,  
When thou beheldst me by my guards  
A captive led away.

The lord archbishop,<sup>1</sup> as it proved,  
Was he that for me sent :  
So onwards we, across the downs,  
To Canterbury went.

That night in prison safely lodged  
I lay, and there to God  
I raised my heart, and the next day  
Before my lord I stood.

“It grieves me, Master Brown,” said he,  
“Again to see thee here ;<sup>2</sup>  
Thine obstinate perversity  
Will cost thy life, I fear.

Last week thou spakest, as we learn,  
Against the holy mass ;  
Saying that souls might not thereby  
From purgatory pass.

<sup>1</sup> Note *D*.

Note *E*

Already for thine heresy  
A faggot thou hast borne,  
Unless thou quit thy froward ways,  
Thou art a man forlorn."

"My lord," said I, "I cannot turn  
From what the Scripture saith :  
If you will prove mē wrong by that,  
Then will I change my faith.

In Holy Scripture we may read  
How, once for all, our Lord  
His soul an offering for sin,  
As our High Priest, outpoured ;

And that the precious blood which then  
Upon the cross He spilt,  
Doth every true believer cleanse  
From every stain of guilt.

Why should we then, in life or death,  
Another priest<sup>1</sup> desire ?  
Or why another sacrifice  
Should Christian men require ?"

"'Tis not," said he,<sup>2</sup> "for such as thou  
Of Scripture thus to talk ;  
But by the rules of holy Church,  
Like a good son, to walk.

<sup>1</sup> Note F.

<sup>2</sup> Note G.



Wilt thou, or wilt thou not, submit?  
Ponder that question well.  
Time will I grant thee; so return  
Back to thy prison cell."

There wearily the days rolled on;  
But there I found relief  
By calling on my Saviour's name,  
And telling Him my grief.

At length, when five long weeks were past,  
Spent in that irksome ward,  
Once more they led me forth, that I  
Might answer to my lord.

Beside him sat another judge,  
A bishop grave and stern:  
It was my lord of Rochester,<sup>1</sup>  
As soon I came to learn.

"John Brown," the lord archbishop said,  
"We earnestly desire  
To save thy body from the flame,  
Thy soul from hell's dread fire.

If thou art resolutely bent  
To cast away thy life,  
I pray thee, think with pity on  
Thy children and thy wife.

<sup>1</sup> Note *H*.

This learned bishop, and myself,  
Would put thee in the way  
Which thou should'st follow ; so receive  
With meekness what we say."

With arguments long while they strove  
To turn me, but in vain :  
Then sought they what they might effect  
By force of cruel pain.

My feet upon hot coals they set,  
And scorched them to the bone ;  
Hoping that in mine agony  
I would my faith disown.

But if I should disown that truth  
Which in God's Word I see,  
I should thereby deny my Lord,  
Who taught that truth to me.

And if I should my Lord deny,  
How then could I expect  
That He should count me, when He comes,  
Among His own elect ?

So when they saw no hope was left  
That I might yet be turned,  
They doomed me hither to be brought,  
And here to ashes burned.

I would not harshly of them speak,<sup>1</sup>  
They thought to set me right :  
And now, in this their work, they think  
That God will take delight.

But much I grieve that learned men  
Greater account should make  
Of man's tradition, than the words  
Which God's own Spirit spake.

And much I thank my God that He  
Was nigh to give me strength ;  
Nor will He leave me till I gain  
His heavenly home at length.

And thou, my good Elizabeth,  
Whatever men may say,  
Turn not aside from God's plain path,  
But hold thy steadfast way.

And in the nurture of the Lord,  
Train up thy youthful band,  
That thou and they before His face,  
Without dismay may stand.



Thus, while their neighbours all around  
In peace and comfort sleep,  
These suffering followers of Christ  
Their painful vigil keep.

<sup>1</sup> Note I.

With words of faith, and hope, and love,  
The night's cold hours they cheer;  
And to their God they cry for strength  
The morrow's woe to bear.

The day creeps in, the waking birds  
Merrily hail the light;  
To sad Elizabeth the dawn  
Seems darker than the night.

Now go, dear heart, look to thy babes,  
The Lord thy husband be,—  
My home is now in Paradise,  
And there I'll wait for thee.



Through Ashford town each household meets  
Around the morning meal;  
And many a downcast face bewrays  
The inward grief they feel.

And to their gazing little ones  
Fathers and mothers say,  
"Long time it is since Ashford saw  
So sorrowful a day."

The faggots lie prepared; the stake  
Stands planted in the ground;  
The iron chain with ruthless grasp  
Girdles the martyr round.

But vainly have the mighty men  
Sought to enchain his soul ;  
Made free by Christ, it soars aloft  
Towards the heavenly goal.

The hungry flames let loose begin  
To seize upon their prey :  
But he gives glory to his God  
While yet on earth he may.

He holds aloft his hands in prayer,  
Heavenwards he turns his face,  
And cries ; "Forgive my sins, O Lord,  
I yield me to Thy grace.

Let not the fiend who seeks my woe  
Obtain his purpose fell ;  
I bow beneath Thy chastening rod ;  
But save my soul from hell.

Into Thy hands, O God of truth,  
My spirit I commend :  
Thou hast redeemed me ; take me now,"  
And so he made his end.



The woeful day is past and gone  
Which saw the martyr's death ;  
Black-robed amidst her orphan flock  
Sits lone Elizabeth.

Yet blackness clothes not all her thoughts,—  
Faith gives her gleams of light ;  
By faith she sees her much-loved John  
A spirit pure and bright.

By faith she hears her Saviour say,  
“Fear not, for thou art Mine ;  
Thy husband’s gone, but I remain,  
To cherish thee and thine.”

By faith she sees the gate of heaven  
Thrown open to its King,  
Who takes the field with all His train,  
While hallelujahs ring.

She sees the sky with angels filled,  
She hears the trumpet sound,—  
She sees the ashes of her spouse  
Ungathered from the ground.

She sees him with unnumbered saints,  
New-clad in glorious forms ;  
As new-born flowers break from earth  
After the winter storms.

She sees herself, her offspring too,  
Redeemed, renewed, restored,  
Assembled with them all, to be  
For ever with the Lord.



Now ye that read how brave John Brown  
Endured the cruel flame;  
Oh! put this question to your hearts:  
"Could I have done the same?"

Or rather ask if, day by day,  
The daily cross ye bear,  
Which, if indeed ye follow Christ,  
Ye will not fail to share.

For if thou seekest more the world  
Than Jesus Christ to please;  
If, more than Him, thou dost esteem  
Thy wealth, thy fame, thine ease,

Never would'st thou have kept the rank  
Amid the martyr band,  
Who 'gainst the charge of hellish hosts  
Made their undaunted stand.

But if against temptation's force,  
In things of common life,  
Upheld by grace divine, thou dost  
Wage a victorious strife,

Doubt not that He whose name is now  
Thy refuge and thy rock,  
Would prove Thine all-sufficient aid  
In Satan's fiercest shock.

His wisdom, power, and love are pledged  
The blood-bought flock to keep:  
Nor wolf, nor lion, shall deprive  
The Shepherd of His sheep.



William Tyndale.





WILLIAM TYNDALE.

---

To far retreats had Freedom fled,  
And Truth hung low her mournful head,  
When Rome with giant wings outspread  
Darkened our English ground ;  
And, hadst thou sought the nation through,  
Scarce wouldst thou here and there a few  
Children of Light have found,

Whilst prelates, fenced with power and pride,  
And armed with fire, access denied  
To God's true Word,<sup>1</sup> men lived and died  
    Much like their toiling beasts ;  
Small hope there seemed of better lot,  
For Scripture knowledge favours not  
    The lofty claims of priests.

But from His throne in heaven high  
The Lord beheld with pitying eye,  
    And gave our isle a man  
Who snatched from Rome's unwilling hand  
The key<sup>2</sup> which open made to stand  
The gate which leads to God's own land :  
    Thus brighter days began.

Where Cotswold feeds her gentle sheep,  
And from her rampart high and steep  
    Looks to the breezy west ;  
And views fair Gloucester's fruitful vale,  
And Cambria's heights in distance pale,  
Where seamen spread the swelling sail  
    On Severn's widening breast ;

There, with a knight,<sup>3</sup> whose mansion still  
Adorns the hollow of the hill,  
Dwelt William Tyndale, in the time  
Of the Eighth Henry's golden prime,  
    And Wolsey's towering fame.

<sup>1</sup> Note *A*.   <sup>2</sup> See Luke xi. 52 ; Acts xiv. 27 ; Rom. x. 17.

<sup>3</sup> Note *B*.



There, while he trained the mind of youth,  
Himself he learnt the Gospel truth ;  
    And would that truth proclaim.

At home, abroad, on Cotswold side,  
On Bristol Green, he testified,  
    And plainly showed God's mind.  
And, like his Lord, he roused to spite  
The serpent brood, the sons of night,  
    Blind leaders of the blind.

He saw, and marked<sup>1</sup> with heavy heart,  
How long-robed scribes, with fatal art,  
    Conspired God's Word to hide ;  
How from the men of England's sight  
Dark Latin veiled the Scripture light,  
    Which should have been their guide.

Disputing once, a learned fool,  
Reared in the haughty Roman school,  
    Driven to bay, exclaimed,  
"Better might we the loss afford  
Of God's own laws, than what our lord  
    The Pope of Rome has framed."

Then Tyndale, strong in faith and hope,  
Made answer, "I defy the Pope,  
    Nor to his laws will bow ;  
And if God spare my life, I trow  
The boy that drives the plough shall know  
    More of God's Word than thou."

<sup>1</sup> Note C.

His heart so full, he could not stay ;  
To London soon he takes his way.  
The bishop there,<sup>1</sup> he thought,  
Would lend perchance a helping hand,  
That all the people of the land  
In Scripture might be taught.

But Tonal's aid obtained he not ;  
God cast for him another lot,  
And Tyndale quickly found,  
Whilst England bowed her neck to Rome,  
For his design no sheltering home  
Might be on English ground.

Therefore to set his country free,  
An exile for her sake to be,  
He goes where happier Germany  
Beyond blue ocean lay ;  
For, roused by Luther's trumpet-horn,  
Germans already hailed the morn  
Of long-desired day.

There, first upon the banks of Rhine.<sup>2</sup>  
With patient labour, line by line,  
Labour to him right dear,  
He made the apostolic Greek  
In England's mother-tongue to speak,  
For Englishmen to hear.

<sup>1</sup> Note *D*.

<sup>2</sup> Note *E*.

His rapid pages from the press,  
Like water from the rock's recess  
    For thirsty Israel, poured ;  
And friendly ships<sup>1</sup> to Britain's shore  
For souls athirst the solace bore,  
Like David's three in days of yore,  
    Baffling the hostile ward.

For as cold draughts<sup>2</sup> from loving hands  
To him who faints mid burning sands,  
    So come glad news from distant lands  
    To hearts which crave for good :  
So, o'er the sea by breezes driven,  
Came news from Rhine-land<sup>3</sup>—news from Heaven  
    Of peace through Christ's own blood.

But when thereof the prelates learned,  
Said Wolsey, "Let the book be burned ;  
    And Tostal raised the flame :  
From Paul's Churchyard a curling cloud  
Went up to heaven, and there aloud  
    Proclaimed that deed of shame.

But what avails the wrath of man,  
The tyrant's power, the prelate's ban,  
    When God maintains His cause ?  
The word of mercy, full and free,  
Still came across the rolling sea ;  
For so the Lord would have it be,  
    Despite of human laws.

<sup>1</sup> Note *F*.<sup>2</sup> Prov. xxv. 25.<sup>3</sup> Note *G*.

And though but scantly may be known  
How sprang that seed in secret sown ;  
    Yet may we dare to say,  
That they who then, with toil and pain,  
Sowed where they might, the rugged plain  
Shall see with joy the golden grain  
    In the great harvest day.

Yet one more service Tyndale true  
Must for his Lord and Master do,  
    Before he quits the field ;  
The truths to which, both far and wide,  
His tongue, his pen, have testified,  
    Must with his blood be sealed.

The hounds of Rome<sup>1</sup> with hatred strong,  
And firm intent, have tracked him long :  
    He falls at length their prize.

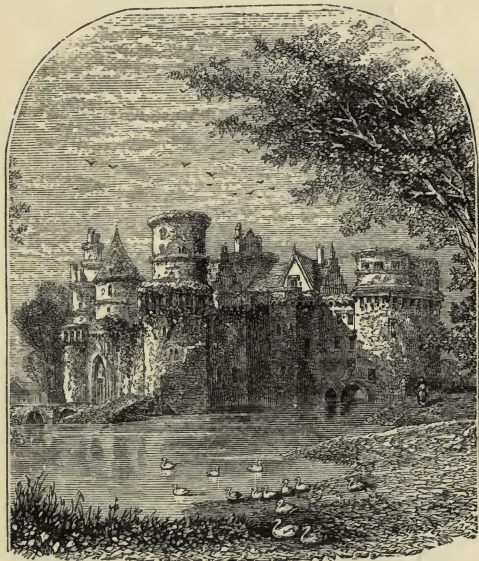
At Vilvorde now he lies in ward,  
Now wears his neck the fatal cord,  
His dying prayer is : " Open, Lord,  
    The King of England's eyes."

Nor rose to heaven in vain that cry,  
For, ere another year<sup>2</sup> went by,  
    God bent proud Henry's will  
To send forth kindlier commands,  
And give into his people's hands  
That book which, more than goods or lands,  
    Remains our treasure still.

<sup>1</sup> Note H.

<sup>2</sup> Note I.

And be it marked by lad and lass  
How God hath brought that thing to pass  
Which godly Tyndale said :  
His Word is taught through England now  
To sun-burnt boys who drive the plough,  
And to each village maid.



VILVORDE CASTLE.

God keep our candle in its place,  
And give the men of England grace  
To love their Bible more ;  
Nor heed the Serpent's wily speech,  
Whether by priestly tongues he teach,  
Or vain sophistic lore<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Note J.

O England! nursling of the Lord,  
By Him with priceless blessings stored,  
Which thou hast lightly prized ;  
Beware lest judgment's righteous blow  
Lay thee, like carnal Esau, low  
In fruitless tears and helpless woe,  
His birthright who despised.

Beware, lest for contempt of light<sup>1</sup>  
Thy sentence be, in gloom of night  
A castaway to sit :  
Lest, high to heaven exalted now,  
At length, like doomed Capernaum, thou  
Go down into the pit.

O God, arise! Thine arm display,  
Let not the tempter have his prey,  
Destroy his deep-laid work :  
Uplift the fallen, tame the proud,  
And to the heedless show the crowd  
Of foes which round them lurk.

Let those who tread gay folly's path,  
Warned by the thunder of Thy wrath,  
Foresee the coming storm,  
And flee the mighty tempest's crash ;  
Ere justice, as the lightning flash,  
Its sudden work perform.

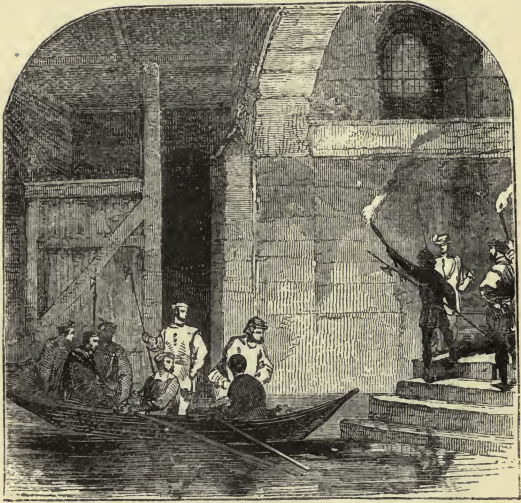
<sup>1</sup> John iii. 19 ; xii. 35, 36.



May Thy good Spirit, by Thy Word,  
Reveal to sinners Christ the Lord,  
Who shelter doth alone afford  
To save their souls alive ;  
The only sacrifice for sin,  
The only plea Thy grace to win,  
The only way by which within  
Thy city to arrive.

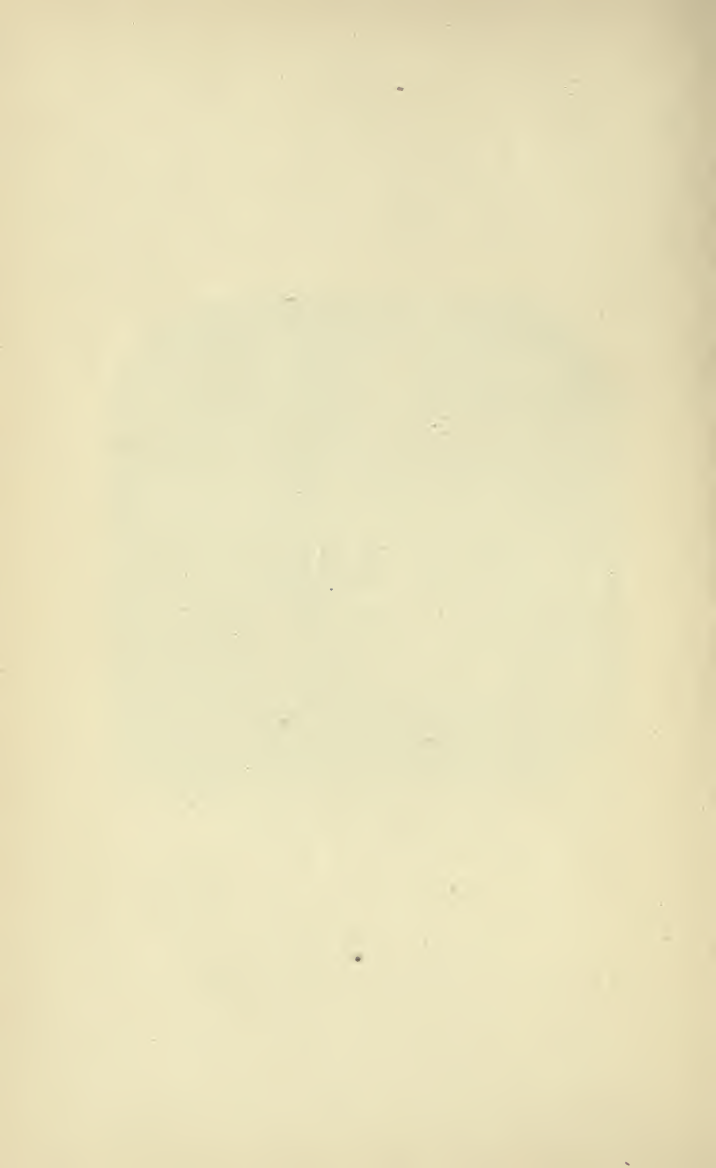


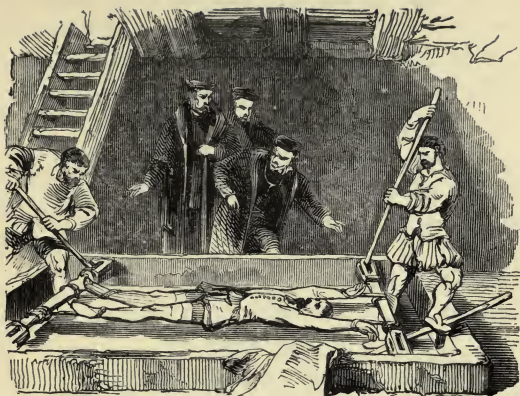
HOUSE OF SIR JOHN WALSH AT LITTLE SODBURY.



TRAITOR'S GATE, TOWER OF LONDON.

Anne Askew.





THE RACK (*from Foxe's "Book of Martyrs"*).

## ANNE ASKEW.

WHY throng the folk to Smithfield ground?  
What say the many tongues whose sound  
Ruffles the summer air?  
For slaughter see yon troop arrive:  
Yet neither ox nor sheep they drive;  
They come to burn three men alive,—  
Yea, and a lady fair.

Alas, poor souls! And tell us why  
Their sentence is decreed to die  
So barbarous a death?  
It is that they have set at naught<sup>1</sup>  
What holy mother Church hath taught,  
So Stephen Gardiner saith.<sup>2</sup>

<sup>1</sup> Note *A*.

<sup>2</sup> Note *B*.

Anne Askew is the lady's name,<sup>1</sup>  
Of godly life and spotless fame,  
From Lincolnshire is she :  
And has for friends, as men report,  
Some of our fierce King Henry's court,  
Ladies of high degree.

But high and low are fain to bow  
Before the storm which rages now  
With terrifying sway.  
Norfolk is at the Council's head,<sup>2</sup>  
And fear is over England spread ;  
And all the wolves, by Gardiner led,  
Are free to roam and prey.

In Lincoln's lofty minster lay<sup>3</sup>  
The English Bible, like a ray  
Of sunshine on a stormy day,  
In the first dawn of spring :  
The Bible, to be read by all,  
Both men and women, great and small,  
By order of the king.

As hungry sheep seek where to feed,  
So, in the book of God to read,  
Thither Anne Askew came ;  
And many priests with jealous eyes  
Observed, and marked with shrewd surmise  
The Bible-loving dame.

<sup>1</sup> Note C.<sup>2</sup> Note D.<sup>3</sup> Note E.



Her husband played the bigot's part ;  
Blinded in mind and hard of heart,  
    He thrust her from his door :  
But Christ, her never-changing Friend,  
Keeps for her at her journey's end  
    A better home in store.

Meanwhile the pilgrim's lot she hath ;  
Stern persecution dogs her path,  
    And grasps her with its might.  
In London see her tracked and caught ;  
And now, before the rulers brought,  
She speaks as by God's Spirit taught,  
    Like a true child of light.

They ask her if the sacred thing,<sup>1</sup>  
Shrined in the pyx, be heaven's King,  
    Boldly she answers, Nay !  
Not for my Maker will I own  
That which ere many days be flown  
    Will turn to base decay.

Your idol god of wheaten bread  
In narrow cell lies limited :  
    But God's true saying stands,—  
As Paul and Stephen plainly tell,—  
That the Almighty doth not dwell  
    In temples made with hands.

<sup>1</sup> Note *F*.

Like Stephen thus, with steadfast face,  
Strong in the Holy Spirit's grace,  
    And heart-sustaining power,  
She stands a witness to the truth;  
But neither right nor force of ruth  
    Avails in this dark hour.

But kindly pity doth not fail  
The 'prentice lads who hear the tale  
Of this good lady in the gaol,  
    Told by her serving-maid;  
Her hard condition they deplore,  
And, though but slender be their store,  
    They send her timely aid.  
Thus He who once Elijah fed,  
By ravens bringing flesh and bread,  
A table for His daughter spread,  
    And her distress allayed.

But sorer now her trial grows;  
From Newgate led, the captive goes<sup>1</sup>  
Where London's Tower sternly shows  
    His walls and turrets hoar;  
To whose strong custody assigned,  
The great, the brave, the good have pined:  
But scarce have these cold stones confined  
    A nobler heart before.

<sup>1</sup> Note G.

Yet neither Rich nor Wriothesley turn  
In pity from their purpose stern,  
    Who come like bloodhounds here :  
More scent of heresy we lack ;  
So take and bind her to the rack ;  
Draw tight the cords, nor let them slack,  
    Till all the truth appear.

'Tis said the keeper's heart gave way  
While there the tortured woman lay,  
    Silent amid her pain ;  
Nor would he further do their will ;  
But left their ruffian hands to fill  
The cup of cruelty, and still  
    To try a harder strain.

Her faithful heart disdains to yield ;  
Firmly resolved her friends to shield,  
    She bears it all ; and now  
A little longer must she stay  
In her poor shattered house of clay ;  
And then shall take her flight away,  
    As bird from storm-tossed bough ;  
And in bright Paradise sit down,  
To wait the never-fading crown  
Which He who gives His saints renown  
    Will set upon her brow.

To Smithfield comes, to see her fate,  
The Chancellor, so high and great ;  
    The Duke of Norfolk too ;  
With Bedford's Earl, and London's Mayor,  
And crowds of those whose hearts will bear  
    The dreadful scene to view.

Belenian, Adams, Lascelles, there,<sup>1</sup>  
Not to behold, but boldly dare  
    And die for Christ, are come.  
Anne also, for her Saviour's sake,  
Will through the fiery portal take  
    Her painful passage home.

So lately racked, she must be borne—  
With weary body, weak and worn—  
    Supported in a chair ;  
But filled her spirit is with power ;  
And, in the resurrection hour,  
Her limbs, which now the flames devour,  
    Shall come forth strong and fair.

Perchance, since flesh and blood are frail,  
Grim death, so near, may make her quail,  
An offered pardon may prevail :

    The Chancellor will try.<sup>2</sup>

Faith shields her heart, she conquers fear,—  
And makes reply : " I came not here  
    My Master to deny."

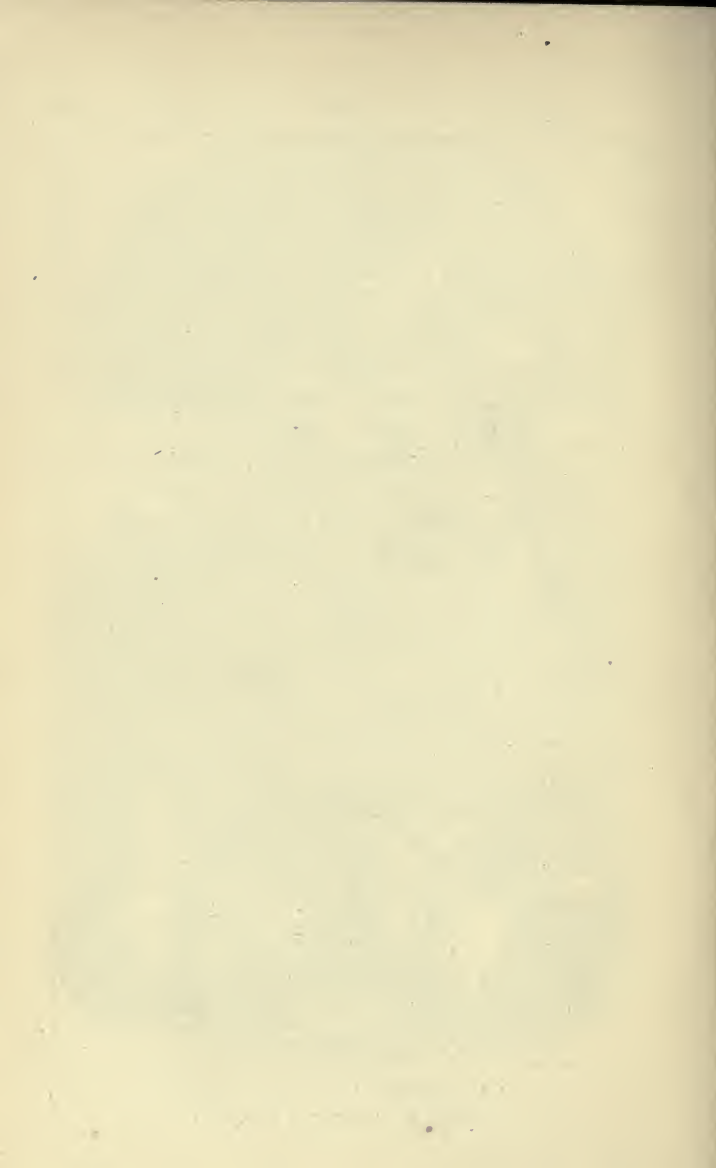
<sup>1</sup> Note *H*.

<sup>2</sup> Note *I*.



MARTYRDOM OF ANNE ASKEW.

(From Foxe's "Book of Martyrs.")





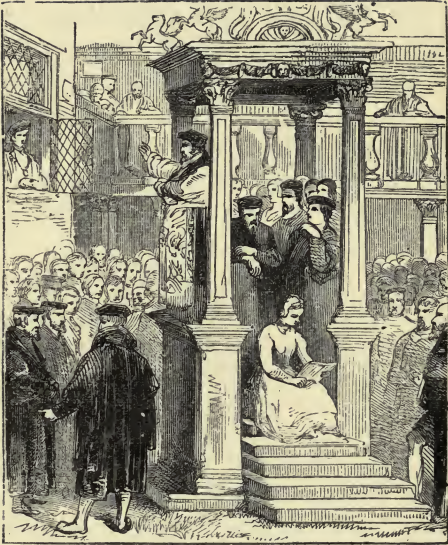
Then flames the living sacrifice,  
Offered to Him who from the skies  
Came down, and bought it at the price  
Of His atoning blood.

Like gold, their faith endures the test  
Of fire, and then their spirits blest  
Enjoy with Christ eternal rest,  
Among the pure and good.

Strong was their love, yet not so strong  
As His who bore more cruel wrong,  
That they might to Himself belong,  
And share His endless joy :  
Who for our sins on Calvary bled,  
And died, and brake forth from the dead,  
That He might bruise the serpent's head,  
And death's fell power destroy.



O Thou who, when the world was made,  
Bad'st new-born light dispel the shade,  
Shine in our hearts ; and thus may we  
The unseen Father's glory see,  
To us made visible in Thee,  
Day-star of truth and grace !  
And for Thy sake may count as dross  
The world's applause, its gain as loss ;  
And bear, like faithful Anne, the cross ;  
And see at length Thy face !



LATIMER PREACHING BEFORE EDWARD VI.

Hugh Latimer.





A

Lamentation and Prayer

OF

HUGH LATIMER,<sup>1</sup>

*IN HIS PRISON AT OXFORD, A.D. 1555.*



OUR rampart mound—alas, how frail!  
On which too fondly we relied—  
Is broken, and across our fields  
Rolls, strong and deep, the roaring tide

And brings to nought our handiwork;  
And that which firmly seemed to stand  
Now floats upturn upon the flood,  
Or loads with wreck the ruined land.

<sup>1</sup> Note *A*.

Trust not in man, the Scripture saith :  
Too well we see that word is true ;  
Our godly king is taken hence,—  
The faithful that remain are few.

Where are the nobles, where the knights  
That laughed to scorn the Pontiff's frown ?  
Where are the priests<sup>1</sup> who late renounced  
Allegiance to the triple crown ?

Where are the folk who thronged to read  
In their own tongue the Scripture-word ?  
Or, gathered by the calling bell,  
The Gospel preacher gladly heard ?

The Gospel must be silent now,  
Nowhere the Bible may be found,  
And for the English prayer or praise  
Drones the dead Latin's empty sound.

England's high Parliament<sup>2</sup> hath made,  
From Freedom's ground a swift retreat ;  
And for the Pope's forgiveness kneeled  
Submissive at the Legate's feet.

Again the priest, with gladsome heart,  
In Roman livery appears :  
Again from lips by fear unsealed  
The secret tale of shame he hears ;

<sup>1</sup> Note B.

<sup>2</sup> Note C



And gives a pardon, false and vain,  
To souls that thus are turned aside  
From Jesus Christ, the true High Priest,  
In whom the sinner should confide.

Again the cake of wheaten bread  
Is worshipped as the Lord of all,  
And crowds, to Mary's image bent,  
On Mary's name for mercy call.

Again the preacher's voice proclaims  
To those who would be freed from guilt,  
That wholly cleansed<sup>1</sup> they cannot be,  
By Jesu's blood for sinners spilt.

For that their debt in part remains,  
Payment whereof will God require,  
By penances, by works, by alms,  
And then by purgatorial fire.

And thus the humble soul is kept  
In bondage hard of slavish fear ;  
And thus the sin-stained works of men  
Are made right goodly to appear.

While the white robe of righteousness,  
Wherewith the Saviour clothes His own---  
That therein clad the guilty may  
Stand uncondemned before the throne—

<sup>1</sup> Note *D*.

Is thrust aside; and sinners take  
The glory due to God's free grace;  
And Satan, the deceiver, smiles  
To see his work proceed apace.

Ah! was it not our nation's sins<sup>1</sup>  
Which brought King Edward to the tomb?  
In love to him, in wrath to us,  
God took him from the ill to come.

For when the light on England shone,  
We grievously misused that light;  
Men boasted of the Gospel truth,  
But walked as children of the night.

And higher rose our tide of guilt  
Than when in ignorance we lay;  
And righteous was the hand divine  
Which took our candlestick away.

Where now will this great ruin end?  
Must all for which we strove be lost?  
Must all we gained be torn away,  
Though blood of saints have paid the cost?

Shall England ride with mighty Spain,  
Exalted in her iron car  
Through ways all red with martyrs' blood,  
Till God's own vengeance close the war?

<sup>1</sup> Note *E*.

Lord, is thy patience at an end?  
Hast Thou no love for England left?  
Must Britain's sons be Satan's slaves,  
Of truth and righteousness bereft?<sup>1</sup>

Nay, all our hope is not yet quenched,  
Our trembling faith still clings to Thee;  
Amid the gloomy thunder-clouds  
Some gleams of heavenly light we see.

As in the worst of Israel's days,  
When Jezebel Thy prophets slew,  
Seven thousand, kept by grace divine,  
Were to the God of Israel true;

So now Thou hast a remnant left  
Of loyal hearts in this our land:  
Men that will not to Baal bow,  
Nor kiss proud Babel's gory hand.

New names of England's offspring stand,  
Entered in Christ's long martyr-roll;  
They finished well their toilsome race,  
And reached with joy the glorious goal.

John Rogers<sup>2</sup> nobly led the way,  
Nor feared the cruel flame to face.  
Brave Hooper, Saunders, Taylor, died  
Victorious through Thy mighty grace.

<sup>1</sup> Note F.

<sup>2</sup> Note G.

And others follow on, and trust  
To praise Thee with their latest breath ;  
Willing Thy name to glorify,  
By faithful life or joyful death.

Father, fulfil the dying prayer<sup>1</sup>  
Of Thy dear servant now asleep ;  
When he commended to Thy care  
The flock which he no more might keep.

Our youthful shepherd lies in dust,  
Fierce wolves on every side we see ;  
No human help appears in view,  
But, Lord, our eyes are unto Thee

Remember not our nation's sins,  
But think on Thine own mercies past ;  
Shall all the work Thy hands have wrought  
Become proud Satan's sport at last ?

Arm of the Lord, awake ! awake !  
As in the days that were of old :  
Was it not Thou that gav'st our isle  
Its teachers true and martyrs bold ?

From Thee began the dawn of hope,  
When Wickliff rose, our morning star ;  
His lustre he received from Thee,  
Then gave it forth both near and far.

<sup>1</sup> Note H.

Impelled by Thee he brought God's Book  
From long concealment into light,  
His followers by Thee sustained  
Held out against oppression's might.

From Thee the noble Cobham drew  
His strength long torment to abide :  
Thou wast with Lambert<sup>1</sup> in the fire,  
When "None but Christ" he loudly cried.

Thy grace enabled youthful Frith<sup>2</sup>  
To play the Christian soldier's part :  
It guided faithful Tyndale's pen,  
And nerved Anne Askew's dauntless heart.

King Henry's wayward will became  
Thy blade to cut the Papal cords ;  
Drawn by Thy love our Edward lived  
Obedient to the Lord of lords.

Oh then, by all Thy mercies past,  
And by the blood for sinners shed,  
And by the glorious power which raised  
Our great Redeemer from the dead ;

And by Thy promises which stand  
Recorded in the Book divine,  
Turn our captivity, O Lord,  
And cause Thy face again to shine.

<sup>1</sup> Note I.

<sup>2</sup> Note J.

Guard our young Princess<sup>1</sup> that remains,  
Thou seest her all with snares beset,  
But it is not too hard for Thee  
To make her England's comfort yet.

Let England once again become,  
From tyrant force, a sheltering ark ;  
A beacon, giving beams of light  
To mariners on waters dark ;

A garden, where the plants of grace,  
Watered and dressed with careful hand,  
May bear the fruits of righteousness,  
Till they adorn a better land.

But as for me, I know full well  
That my departure now is near,  
And to depart and be with Thee  
Is better than all pleasures here.

O heavenly Father ! thanks I give  
That, by thy Holy Spirit's grace,  
Thou didst incline my roaming heart  
To flee from sin, and seek Thy face.

Thou didst instruct me to forsake  
False ways to heaven<sup>2</sup> of man's device ;  
And to draw nigh to Thee by faith,  
In Christ's atoning sacrifice.

<sup>1</sup> Note *K*.

<sup>2</sup> Note *L*.



Thou madest me Thy messenger,  
Beseeching sinners to return,  
Proclaiming peace to contrite hearts,  
And comforting the saints that mourn.



THE PLACE WHERE LATIMER AND RIDLEY WERE BURNT.

Thou hast been with me many a day,  
When I through angry waters came ;  
Be with me in the gates of death,  
That there I may confess Thy name.

To turn Thy pilgrims back, a fence  
Of fire across the way is made ;  
And flesh and blood would fain retreat,  
And Satan labours to persuade.

But I commit my soul to One  
Whose power, whose love, I know of old :  
Who said, "My sheep shall not be lost,  
Nor any pluck them from My hold."

Fulfil that promise, Lord, to me,  
On Thee alone my hopes depend ;  
As Thou hast kept me hitherto,  
So keep me to the very end.

And if my flesh must feed the fire,  
Oh let that flame a candle<sup>1</sup> be,  
For generations yet unborn,  
Who, aided by its light, shall see

That a poor sinner, such as I,  
If he, believing, do but cast  
His all on Christ, shall win the day  
And prove a conqueror at last.

<sup>1</sup> Note *M*.

Appendix.



MARTYRS IN THE STOCKS.



## APPENDIX.

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### JOHN WICKLIFF.

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A. John Wickliff, who has justly been called “The Morning-star of the Reformation,” was born about the year 1324, that is to say, shortly before the accession to the throne of Edward III., and died December 31, 1384, in the reign of the succeeding king, Richard II. The authorities which I have followed in the preceding outline of his history are the biographies of Vaughan and Le Bas, Turner’s *History of the Middle Ages*, and a collection of extracts from Wickliff’s writings, accompanied by a memoir of his life and his followers, which is to be found in the series of *British Reformers*, published by the Religious Tract Society. A biography of Wickliff has also lately been issued by the same Society.

B. The national wealth of England in the days of Wickliff was an insignificant fraction of what it now is. Yet the ecclesiastical buildings of that period astonish us by their magnificence. The explanation is to be found in the fact that the Church had got into her possession a vast proportion of the resources of the kingdom. “As in those times of civil tumult, great rapines and violence were daily committed by overgrown lords and their adherents, they were taught to believe that founding a monastery a little before their deaths

would atone for a life of incontinence, disorder, and bloodshed. Hence innumerable abbeys and religious houses were built within a century after the Conquest, and endowed not only with the tithes of parishes which were ravished from the secular clergy, but also with lands, manors, lordships, and extensive baronies."—Blackstone's *Commentaries*, iv., 108. Blackstone says of Edward I. : "He also effectually closed the great gulph in which all the landed property of the kingdom was in danger of being swallowed, by his reiterated statutes of mortmain."—*Com.*, iv., 426.

The monastic orders chiefly profited by these bequests of land ; but Wickliff severely reproveth the avarice and luxury which was common among the parish priests also. The following passage is from his work, *How the Office of Curates is ordained of God*. (It must be remembered that the term "curate" originally meant a priest having charge of souls, as in a parish.)

"The office of curates is ordained of God ; few do it well, and many full evil, therefore test we their defaults with God's help.

"First, they are more busy about worldly goods than virtues and good keeping of men's souls. For he that can best get riches of this world together, and have a great household and worldly array, is held to be a worthy man of holy church, though he know not the best point of the Gospel. Such a one is praised and borne up by the bishops and their officers. But the curate that gives himself to study holy writ, and teach his parishioners to save their souls and live in meekness, penance, and busy labour about spiritual things, and cares not about worldly respect and riches, is held to be a fool and destroyer of holy church. He is despised and persecuted by high priests and prelates, and their officers, and is hated by other curates.

"These negligent curates think but little, how dearly Christ bought man's soul with His precious blood and death, and how hard a reckoning He shall make at doomsday for those souls,



“They take their worldly mirth, hawking, hunting, and doing other vanities, and suffer wolves of hell to strangle men’s souls by many cursed sins.”—*British Reformers*, p. 128.

C. “That the generality of the clergy were unfit for the office of preparing their people for the hour of death or the day of judgment, seems beyond all question. Toward the end of the 13th century their ignorance, folly, and grossness, are vehemently denounced by Archbishop Peckham, who complains that those places which most urgently needed instruction were never so much as visited ; so that the words of the prophet were calamitously verified ; the children asked for bread, and there was none to break it to them ; the poor and destitute cried for water, and their tongue was parched up.” “All this while the people were left, not only without the Scripture, but almost without devotional helps of any kind, in any degree adapted to their wants.”—Le Bas, *Life of Wicklif*, pp. 69, 70.

It would be unjust to say that there is no truth whatever in the praise bestowed by men like the late Dr. Maitland on the monasteries of the middle ages, as asylums where learning and piety found a refuge, “in those days of misrule and turbulence.” But (not to speak of the frightfully dark side of the picture to which such writers shut their eyes) the obvious question occurs, How is it that those *were* “days of misrule and turbulence?” The population of Europe was professedly Christian ; the clergy were great in numbers, wealth, and power. Why was it needful to have any *refuges* for piety or learning ?

The Christians of the first century did not found monasteries : the world and its powers were in open array against them ; but their preachers fought and conquered with the sword of the Spirit. Modern missionaries have done the same among savage nations. “Misrule and turbulence” have disappeared again and again under the simple preaching of the Gospel by a few feeble men. Why did not the

mighty ecclesiastical army of the middle ages make a speedy end of such things? The answer is that these so-called ministers of Christ neither preached nor practised the Gospel. The state of the flock was entirely in harmony with the character of the shepherds.

It would be a great mistake to think that the ignorance of the laity necessarily resulted from the absence of *printing*. If half the labour and money bestowed on church architecture, church decorations, painted windows, costly ecclesiastical garments, etc., had been bestowed on the multiplication of manuscript copies of the Scripture, and on teaching the people to read the Scripture, knowledge of the Bible would have been a common thing. A great deal of scriptural knowledge existed among the persecuted Waldenses and Lollards, notwithstanding all the efforts of the Church of Rome to wrest the Word of God from their grasp.

That the monasteries preserved copies of the Scriptures and some amount of learning is undeniable; but it was in such a way as the unfaithful servant *preserved* the talent committed to his care.

Wickliff, commenting on the pains bestowed on elaborate church services, says: "If all the study and labour that men have now about Salisbury use, and multitudes of new costly portesses (breviaries), and all other such books, were turned into making of Bibles, and in studying and teaching thereof, how much should God's Law be furthered and known and kept! And now it is so much hindered, unstudied, and unkept."—*British Reformers*, Wickliff, p. 148.

*D.* It is some consolation to think that, amidst the general depravity, a faithful shepherd was here and there to be found; such as the celebrated Roger Grostete, Bishop of Lincoln, or as the scripture-loving parish priests to whom Wickliff alludes in the passage above cited. Chaucer's portrait of a good priest is well-known, though sometimes quoted in a much altered form. The following passages

(altered only in spelling) are from a black-letter edition in the possession of F. J. S. Foljambe, Esq.

“A good man there was of religion ;  
He was a poor parson of a town,  
But rich he was of holy thought and work,  
He was also a learned man and a clerk,  
That Christ’s gospel truly would he teach ;  
His parishens devoutly would preach.  
Benign he was, and wondrous diligent ;  
And in adversity full patient.  
And such a one he was proved oft sithes [times],  
Full loth were him to curse for his tithes.

\* \* \* \*

Wide was his parish and houses far asunder,  
But he ne left, neither for rain [nor] thunder,  
In sickness, nor in mischief, for to visit  
The feerest in his parish, much or light [great or small].

\* \* \* \*

And though he holy were and virtuous,  
He was not to sinful men despiteous.  
Nor of his speech dangerous nor dign ;  
But in his teaching discreet and benign.  
To drawn folk to heaven with fairness  
By good example, this was his business.  
But if it were any person obstinate,  
Whether he were of high or low estate,  
Him would he snibbe sharply for the nonce,  
A better priest I trow, nowhere none is.  
He waited after no pomp or reverence,  
He maked him no spiced conscience,  
But Christ’s lore, and His apostles twelve,  
He taught, but first he followed it himself.

It is important to remember that although ignorance and error, of the grossest kind, abounded in Wickliff’s days, yet the Church of Rome was not dogmatically pledged to false doctrine to the same extent at that time, as since the

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Council of Trent and the decree of the Papal Infallibility. Consequently, Wickliff, and men like him, were, so far, more at liberty to preach Scripture truth than a Roman Catholic priest now is.

*E.* The "Schoolmen" were theologians of the middle ages, who treated the doctrines of Christianity as matters of metaphysical science, and endeavoured to investigate the deep things of God by human logic. "Among schoolmen, Aristotle was revered as the only safe guide to the meaning of St. Paul. Aided by the logic and metaphysics of their master, there was nothing, either known or supposed to have been, which these disputants did not attempt to master."—Vaughan's *Life of Wickliff*, i., 232. As may be supposed, the results of such learned folly were very unprofitable and vain. But the veneration paid to the writings of the more famous schoolmen far exceeded that in which the Holy Scriptures were held. (See Le Bas, pp. 76—78.)

*F.* The following extracts from Wickliff's writings contain doctrines corresponding with those which I have endeavoured to express in verse.

"Many think, if they give a penny to a pardoner, they shall be forgiven the breaking of all the commandments of God, and therefore they take no heed how they keep them. But I say to thee for certain, though thou have priests and friars to sing for thee, and though thou each day hear many masses and found chantries and colleges, and go on pilgrimages all thy life, and give all thy goods to pardoners, all this shall not bring thy soul to heaven. While if the commandments of God are revered to the end, though neither penny nor halfpenny be possessed, there shall be everlasting pardon and bliss of heaven." (Le Bas, p. 115: The "pardoners" were men resembling the notorious Tetzal and his companions, who travelled about the country selling indulgences which they had obtained from Rome.)

“If this pardon be a spiritual and heavenly gift, it should be given freely, as Christ teaches in the Gospel, and not for money, nor worldly goods, nor fleshly favour. But if a rich man will dearly buy, he shall have a pardon extending to a thousand years, though he be really accursed of God for his sinful life.”

“Christ is Himself the mediator, the intercessor; the best, the most ready, and the most benign. He would therefore be a fool who should seek for another. Christ is always dwelling with the Father, and ever ready to intercede for us. We ought not then to seek the mediation of saints, because He is kinder and more disposed to help us than any of them.” (Wickliff’s *Trialogus*, a Latin work, quoted by Turner, vol. v., p. 178.)

“If priests have power to release sin as Christ’s vicars, nevertheless they have this power only inasmuch as they accord with Christ. So that if their keys and Christ’s will are discording and twain, they feign falsely to absolve, and then they neither loose nor bind.” (Wickliff’s sermons in *British Reformers*, p. 188. See also Vaughan, i., 385, 386.)

“The prelates of this world and the priests, high and low, say freely, and write in their law, that the king hath no jurisdiction nor power over their persons, nor over the goods of holy Church. And yet Christ and His Apostles were most obedient to kings and lords, and taught all men to be subject to them.

“And this seemeth well according to their new law of decretals, where proud clerks have ordained that our clergy shall pay no subsidy nor tax, nor anything for the keeping of our king and our realm, without assent from the worldly priest of Rome.” (Vaughan, ii., 262—267. See also Le Bas, 100—107.)

Wickliff’s writings do not exhibit that clear statement of the great doctrine of justification by faith which was so energetically taught by Luther and his brother-reformers of the 16th century, and which proved so mighty an engine for



overthrowing the strongholds of Romish error. But we find in his teaching the foundation truth on which justification by faith rests, namely, the doctrine of Christ's expiatory sacrifice of Himself upon the cross. The following passages are examples of it :

"In the old law they were wont to offer a lamb without blemish, which should be a year old, for the sin of the people. And thus Christ was without blemish, and was offered on the cross for the sin of all this world.

"It is known by belief how man trespassed to God, and how by God's righteousness that trespass must needs be punished, and how it might not be punished and yet mankind be saved, unless Christ both God and man had offered Himself upon the tree. This offering was sacrifice made unto God for our good."—*British Reformers*, pp. 188, 89, 202.

"As it behoved that satisfaction should be made for sin, so it behoved that the same nature of man should make a satisfaction equal to the guilt which that nature had incurred in the first formed man. This no one could possibly do unless he united in himself the nature of God and man. For other men cannot of themselves even make satisfaction individually for their own sins ; how then shall any of them make satisfaction for the whole race of mankind?" (From the *Trialogus*, a work in Latin, *British Reformers*, p. 180.)

Though salvation by *faith* is not so clearly and fully set forth in Wickliff's writings as in those of the later reformers, or as in Holy Scripture, yet the subjoined passage shows that it was at least recognised by him.

"As if Paul would say thus, Beside the old law that was given must come a man to make satisfaction, and this must be both God and man. But this law concluded well that all mankind was under sin ; and, by occasion evil taken, sin was aggravated by this law. And the blessed end of all this sorrow was contained in Jesus Christ, that the promise made to Abraham should be given by faith of Him. So that if men believe in Christ, and make a point of this belief, then



the promise that God hath made, to come into the land of life, shall be given, by virtue of Christ, to all men who make this the chief matter."—*British Reformers*, p. 225.

It must be borne in mind that Wickliff lived in the midst of an Antinomianism resembling that of the Pharisees and Scribes; namely, a blind persuasion that by accepting the doctrines of the Church, and conforming to the rites of the Church, men could secure themselves against the consequences of an ungodly and vicious life. Hence it was natural that the stress of his teaching should, like that of John the Baptist and of our Lord, be very much directed against the vain confidence of trusting in external acts of religion, so long as the heart was estranged from God, and the commandments of God were trampled under foot. In regard to the work of the Holy Spirit, Wickliff speaks plainly and forcibly.

G. The work which has above all immortalised the name of Wickliff was his translation and circulation of the Holy Scriptures in the English tongue. Professor Westcott, in his *History of the English Bible*, says, "A complete English New Testament was finished about 1380. To this a version of the Old Testament was soon added, which appears to have been undertaken by a friend of Wickliff's, Nicholas de Hereford." The work seems to have been interrupted by the excommunication of Hereford, and "was afterwards completed, as is supposed, by Wickliff. . . Within a few years after his death a complete revision was undertaken by John Purvey. . . It is scarcely necessary to add that Sir T. More's statement that the Holy Bible was translated long before Wickliff's days is not supported by the least independent evidence." Lingard and Wiseman, trying to conceal their Church's disgrace, have repeated More's assertion, but the testimony of Knighton, Wickliff's contemporary and enemy, is conclusive. "Christ delivered His Gospel to the clergy and doctors of the Church, that they might administer to the

laity and to weaker persons, according to the state of the times and the wants of men. But this Master John Wickliff translated it out of Latin into English, and thus laid it more open to the laity and to women, who could read, than it had formerly been to the most learned of the clergy, even to those of them who had the best understanding." (Vaughan, ii., 44.)

No translation of Old or New Testament into English was ever published under sanction of the Church of Rome, until the New Testament appeared in 1582, *fifty-six years after Tyndale's New Testament was first printed, and more than a hundred years after the invention of printing.* The Church of Rome grants the use of the Scriptures, when it would be impolitic to withhold them; but this is only "making a virtue of necessity." Wherever she has reigned undisturbed the Bible is scarcely known. *Individual members* of the Church of Rome have no doubt been found who sincerely favoured the circulation of the Bible; but that Church *as a body* is steadily opposed to it; and has only too good reason for being so.

Wickliff's testimony is very clear on this point. "They are Antichrists, hindering Christian men from knowing their belief of Holy Writ; for they cry openly that secular men should not intermeddle with the Gospel, to read it in modern tongue, but listen to their spiritual fathers' preaching, and do after him in all things. But this is expressly against God's teaching. For God commandeth generally to each layman that he have God's commands before him, and teach them to his children."—*How the Office of Curates is ordained of God. British Reformers*, p. 133.

H. Knighton says of Wickliff's disciples that their numbers increased rapidly, and that "starting like saplings from the root of a tree, they were multiplied and filled every place within the compass of the land." (Vaughan, ii. 188.) His doctrines were spread through the length and breadth

of the land by travelling preachers. There was, no doubt, as there ever will be, much chaff mixed with the wheat among his followers; but the mere fact that, in spite of bitter persecution, numbers of them continued to prize and hold fast the Word of God, is sufficient evidence that there were many sincere and true disciples of Christ among the oppressed Lollards. The severity of the winnowing proved that all was not chaff. "The disciples of Wickliff," says Reihner, a Popish writer, "are men of a serious, modest deportment, avoiding all ostentation in dress, mixing little with the busy world, and complaining of the debauchery of mankind. They maintain themselves wholly by their own labour, and utterly despise wealth, being fully content with bare necessaries. They are chaste and temperate; are never seen in taverns, or amused by the trifling gaieties of life. Yet you find them always employed either learning or teaching. They are concise and devout in their prayers, blaming an unanimated prolixity. They never swear; speak little; and in their public preaching lay the chief stress on charity."—*Lives of Wickliff and his most Eminent Disciples*, by Gilpin, pp. 112, 113.

In Chaucer's *Canterbury Tales* the good priest is called a Lollard by the man whom he reproves for swearing.

The Parson him answered, Benedicite:  
 What aileth the man so sinfully to swear?  
 Our host answered; O Jenkin! be ye there?  
 Now good men (quod our host), hearken to me.  
 I smell a Loller in the wind (quod he);

\* \* \* \*

This Loller here will preachen us somewhat."

I. Ann of Bohemia, wife of Richard II., appears to have been a sincere friend of the Gospel. Archbishop Arundel himself, in a sermon preached at her funeral, says that she "constantly studied the four Gospels in English, with the expositions of the doctors; and in the study of these, and in

the perusal of godly books, she was more diligent than even the prelates themselves."

Ann "brought over with her to England several Bohemian attendants, who after the death of that princess, returned to their native land, and imported the writings of Wickliff. Some Bohemians went to the then far-famed University of Oxford; and Jerome of Prague is said to have remained for some time at that university, whence he returned furnished with the works of Wickliff, and imbued with his opinions. It is also said that two English Lollards, named James and Conrad of Canterbury, arrived at Prague; where, Huss having received them into his house, they communicated to him the works of Wickliff." "Huss translated several of Wickliff's works, and sent them to the principal nobleman of Bohemia and Moravia: and their circulation was not confined to these countries, but extended to Poland, where they found ardent admirers."—Krasinski's *Slavonia*, pp. 34, 35.

*J.* The celebrated council held at Constance, A.D. 1414–1418, made itself infamous, by burning alive John Huss and Jerome of Prague, the former in spite of a safe conduct granted him by the Emperor Sigismund. Huss and Jerome died triumphantly, trusting in their Redeemer's name.

In spite, however, of persistent persecution, the Protestants of Bohemia continue to this day, and now enjoy a degree of religious freedom.

The community of the "United Brethren," or Moravians, as they are commonly called, was originally composed of a remnant of Huss's followers, who, driven by the persecution of the Austrian Government, fled from Moravia and settled in Saxony, on the estate of the illustrious Count Zinzendorf, A.D. 1722. Their simple piety and their missionary zeal have long been the admiration of Christians.

*K.* The doctrine of the Church of Rome, as defined by the

Council of Trent, and binding on every one of her members, is that *a whole and perfect Christ, body, blood, soul, and divinity, is contained in every separate portion, both of the consecrated bread and the consecrated wine.* (Conc. Trid. Sess. XIV., cap. 3.) Consequently Divine worship is due both to the bread and the wine thus transubstantiated; and Divine worship is actually paid in every Roman Catholic congregation to the consecrated host, exactly as it would be to Christ Himself if present in His proper form.

The Church of Rome further teaches that in the mass, Christ, under the appearance of bread and wine, is offered as a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead; and a considerable source of revenue to the priesthood of the Church of Rome arises from money paid for supposed sacrifices of Christ's body and blood, offered on behalf of souls in purgatory. "It is true, the priests in general repudiate warmly the accusation brought against them of making the mass a subject of commercial transaction; but in point of fact it is really so. The priest celebrates his mass in exchange for a fixed price, as a lawyer or doctor gives a consultation for a fee. This is so truly the case, that usually Roman Catholics, in applying to their curé (parish priest) to have a mass said, simply use this expression, "Monsieur le curé, I have come to *order* a mass;" exactly as they would say to their shoemaker, "I have come to order a pair of shoes."—"*How I came out from Rome.* By C. L. Trivier, formerly vicar of St. Michel, Dijon," p. 84. And these masses are supposed to be none the less efficacious, however bad a man the priest who offers them, or the person who pays for them, may be.

L. Wickliff's doctrine of the Lord's Supper is obscure; but he clearly denied the transubstantiation of the bread and wine. In his elaborate Latin confession on the subject he states that Christ's body was present in the Eucharist in a threefold manner, that is to say, virtually, spiritually, and



sacramentally, but not "substantialiter, corporaliter, et dimensionaliter," in which respects it was in heaven. In a celebrated work ascribed to Wickliff, and entitled *The Wicket*, he speaks more strongly. If this work is really Wickliff's own production, it indicates a great progress in his views after the date of the Latin confession, in which he seems clearly to allow the adoration of the host, as being in a mystical sense Christ's body.

In 1382, Courtney was made Archbishop of Canterbury, and a few days later convened a synod, in which twenty-four "conclusions," relating to the mass among other things, and described as opinions publicly preached in England, were condemned. Courtney followed up the pursuit to Oxford, and obtained letters from Richard II. addressed to the vice-chancellor and proctors of that University, commanding them to expel Wickliff. It appears from Foxe that this injunction was obeyed with reluctance, Wickliff having many adherents at Oxford.

After his expulsion from Oxford, Wickliff retired to his parish of Lutterworth, where he seems to have been but little molested, till his death, which took place about two years and a half later, December 31, 1384.

*M.* Of the various explanations given of the term "Loller" or "Lollard," the true one is no doubt that which derives it from the same root as the German verb, *lullen*, to sing. It was somewhat analogous to the term "psalm-singer," applied by sailors in ridicule to a religious man. The termination, *ard*, it may be noticed, generally indicates a word of reproach, *e.g.*, drunkard, dotard.

Not long after the death of Wickliff, in the year 1400, the next after Henry IV.'s accession, the clergy obtained an Act of Parliament by which every bishop was constituted an inquisitor, having the power of life and death in his own diocese. For by it any one whom the bishop had convicted of heresy, he might hand over to the sheriff, who was thereupon



required to burn him alive without further trial. This infamous statute became no dead letter in the hands of some of the prelates, as the diocesan records preserved by Foxe too plainly testify.

Greater atrocities have been committed in other countries, but it would be hard to find an example of religious oppression carried further by men calling themselves Christians, than in the following cases, taken from the register of Lincoln.

“Richard Bartlet, by his oath, was constrained to detect Agnis Wellis, his sister, in three points, first, *for learning the Epistle of St. James in English*, of Thurstan Littlepage, etc.

“James Morden, compelled in like manner by his oath, did detect Agnes Ashford of Chesham (then in the diocese of Lincoln) for teaching this James Morden the words following (Matt. v. 13-18). And five times went he to the foresaid Agnes to learn this lesson. Also that the said Agnes did teach him to say this lesson (Matt. v. 1-3 and 5). And twice he came to her to learn this lesson. *And these lessons the said Agnes was bid to recite before six bishops, who straitly enjoined and commanded her that she should teach those lessons no more to any man, and especially not to her children.*

“Also Robert Pope, John Morden, and his wife, because they were heard in the presence of this James Morden, their nephew, *to recite the Ten Commandments in their house in English.*

“*This James Morden confessed that he used his Pater-noster (Lord's Prayer) and Creed so much in English, that he forgot many words thereof in Latin, and therefore was enjoined by Bishop Smith to say it no more in English, but only in Latin.*”—See other examples in *British Reformers* and Foxe.

N. These three prelates filled the see of Canterbury in succession from 1382 to 1443, and were all persecutors.

Sawtry, a priest, had the honour of suffering first (so far as we are aware) under the cruel Act of 1400. He was burned at Smithfield, February, 1401. Badby's martyrdom was made remarkable by the presence of the Prince of Wales (afterwards Henry IV.). Hearing him cry for mercy, when he felt the fire, the prince ordered the flames to be extinguished, and offered him life and a pension if he would recant. But the martyr refused the offer, and the work of death was finished.

The truly illustrious Lord Cobham was accused by his enemies of treason as well as of heresy. But Mr. Turner justly remarks that the history of the supposed conspiracy, even as given by Walsingham (the principal authority for the tale, and an enemy of the Lollards), is made up of surmises, rumours, and suspicions, without any real evidence.—*History of England in the Middle Ages*, ii., 451-453. Cobham was hung in chains over a fire, and cruelly roasted to death, in the reign of Henry V., A.D. 1418.

After the time of Chicheley, the persecution seems to have slackened, owing perhaps to the Wars of the Roses, which turned men's minds another way. But in Henry VII.'s reign it was carried on actively, and was continued under Henry VIII. In 1494, Joan Boughton, an aged lady of eighty years or more, was burned in Smithfield. In 1506, William Tylsworth was burnt at Amersham, and his own daughter compelled to light the pile. At Coventry, six men and one woman were burned for teaching their children the Lord's Prayer and Ten Commandments in English.

One of the Lollards who suffered in Henry VIII.'s reign was John Brown, executed at Ashford, A.D. 1511.

Six years later, October 31, 1517, Luther first came into conflict with the Church of Rome, by posting his famous propositions, against the sale of indulgences, on the church door at Wittemberg.

The constancy with which the oppressed Lollards held fast and prized their manuscript Scriptures (sometimes com-

mitting portions of them to memory, as we have seen above) is worthy of all admiration. Nothing gives a more lively idea of their affection for the Word of God, and of the ruthless endeavours made to wrest it from their grasp, than the diocesan registers already referred to. The following are some further particulars recorded in them :

“John Butler, carpenter, K. Butler, W. King of Uxbridge. These three sat up all night in the house of Durdant of Ivercourt, reading all the night in a book of Scripture.

“Nicholas Durdant of Staines, etc. . . . These were detected, for that old Durdant of Ivercourt, sitting at dinner with his children and their wives, having bid a boy there standing to depart out of the house, that he should not hear and tell, did recite certain places unto them out of the Epistles of St. Paul and of the Gospels.

“Alice Colins, wife of Richard Colins. This Alice likewise was a famous woman among them, and had a good memory and could recite much out of the Scriptures and other good books ; and therefore, when any conventicle of these men did meet at Burford, commonly she was sent for, to recite unto them the declaration of the Ten Commandments and the Epistles of Peter and James.” (From the Register of Lincoln, 1521. Foxe, iv., 221, etc., quoted in *British Reformers*.)

Strype gives extracts from the register of the diocese of London under the date 1527, which show the same state of things.

John Tyball, a Lollard examined before Tonsal, Bishop of London, April 28, 1528, confessed, “that about two years ago he companied with Sir Richard Fox, curate of Bumpstead” (priests as well as knights were thus styled in those days), “and showed him all his books that he had ; that is to say, the New Testament in English, the Gospel of Matthew and Mark in English, which he had of John Pykas of Colchester, and a book expounding the Pater Noster, the Ave Maria, and the Credo ; certain of Paul’s Epistles in

English, after the old translation (Wickliff's), the four Evangelists in English. The which four Evangelists and Paul's Epistles he burnt as he said before."

Tyball also relates a visit to London for the purpose of getting one of Tyndale's Testaments from a Friar Barons. "And he saith that the said Friar Barons did perceive very well that Thomas Hills and this respondent were infected with opinions, because they would have the New Testament."

They also told him of the manuscript Gospels and Epistles which they had "after the old translation," which books the said Friar did little regard, and said, A point for them, for they be not to be regarded to the new printed Testament in English, for it is of more cleaner English. And then the said Friar Barons delivered to them the said New Testament in English, for which they paid 3s. 2d., and desired them that they would keep it close."

Thomas Hemsted confessed that, about a year and a half past, his own wife taught him the Lord's Prayer, Hail Mary, and Creed in English, "which she learned of Gilbert Shipwright, being dead; and counselled him that he should keep it close. And in a while after he was chosen churchwarden of Bumpstead with John Tyball; and then used the company much of Sir Richard Fox and the said Tyball. And when the said Sir Richard and Tyball had perceived that his wife had taught him the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and the Credo, they did call this respondent *brother in Christ and a known man.*" (Strype, *Ecc. Mem.* ii., 52-55, 61.)

Three shillings and twopence was a very high price for a New Testament, *according to the value of money at that time*, but it was cheap in comparison with the price which the Lollards had been paying for their manuscript Scriptures. From the Norwich Register, it appears that in 1429 Nicholas Belward gave no less than £2 16s. 8d. for a New Testament. Foxe mentions some who gave a load of hay for a few chapters of St. James or St. Paul in English.

Truly one may say, "the Word of God was precious in

those days," and Foxe's remark upon the oppressed Lollards is worthy to be remembered : " To see their travails, their earnest seeking, their burning zeal, their readings, their watchings, their sweet assemblies, their love and concord, their godly living, their marrying with the faithful, may make us now in these our days of free profession to blush for shame." (Quoted in *British Reformers.*)



INTERIOR OF LOLLARD'S TOWER.



## JOHN BROWN.



*A.* As I have, in the foregoing verses, used some poetic licence in filling up from imagination the brief outline of Foxe's narrative, it may be well to give the reader the narrative itself, so as to let him see how much of the ballad founded upon it is actual history.

Foxe's narrative is as follows. It appears from a note that his authority was, in part at least, John Brown's own daughter, Alice. He adds in a note that a son of John Brown, named Richard, was in prison at Canterbury, and sentenced to be burned, at the time of Queen Mary's death; but escaped in consequence of that event.

"Hereunto let us now adjoin the story of one John Brown, a good martyr of the Lord, burnt at Ashford, about this fourth year of King Henry VIII., whose story hereunder followeth :

"The occasion of the first trouble of this John Brown was by a priest sitting in a Gravesend barge. John Brown being at the same time in the barge, came and sat hard by him; whereupon, after certain communication, the priest asked him: 'Dost thou not know,' said he, 'who I am; thou sittest too near me; thou sittest on my clothes.' 'No, sir,' said he, 'I know not what you are.' 'I tell thee, I am a priest.' 'What, sir! are you a parson or vicar, or a lady's chaplain?' 'No,' quoth he, again; 'I am a soul-priest. I sing for a



soul,' saith he. 'Do you so, sir,' quoth the other; 'that is well done. I pray you, sir,' quoth he, 'where find you the soul when you go to mass?' 'I cannot tell thee,' said the priest. 'I pray you, where do you leave it, sir, when the mass is done?' 'I cannot tell thee,' said the priest. 'Neither can you tell where you find it when you go to mass, nor where you leave it when the mass is done! how then can you have the soul?' said he. 'Go thy ways,' said the priest; 'thou art a heretic, and I will be even with thee.'

"So, at the landing, the priest, taking with him Walter More and William More, two gentlemen, brethren, rode straightway to the Archbishop Warham. Hereupon, the said John Brown, within three days after, his wife being churched the same day, and he bringing in a mess of pottage to the board to his guests, was sent for, and his feet bound under his own horse, and so brought up to Canterbury; neither his wife, nor he, nor any of his, knowing whither he went, nor whither he should; and there continuing from Low Sunday till the Friday before Whit Sunday (his wife not knowing all this while where he was), he was set in the stocks overnight, and on the morrow went to death, and was burned at Ashford.

"The same night as he was in the stocks at Ashford, where he and his wife dwelt, his wife then hearing of him, came and sat by him all the night before he should be burned: to whom he declaring the whole story how he was handled, showed and told how that he could not set his feet to the ground, for they were burned to the bones; and told her how by the two bishops, Warham and Fisher, his feet were heated upon the hot coals, and burned to the bones, 'to make me,' said he, 'to deny my Lord, which I will never do; for if I should deny my Lord in this world, He would hereafter deny me. 'I pray thee,' said he, 'therefore, good Elizabeth, continue as thou hast begun, and bring up thy children virtuously and in the fear of God.' And so, the next day, on Whit

Sunday eve, this godly martyr was burned. Standing at the stake, this prayer he made, holding up his hands :

O Lord, I yield me to Thy grace,  
Grant me mercy for my trespass.  
Let never the fiend my soul chase ;  
Lord, I will bow, and Thou shalt beat,  
Let never my soul come in hell heat."

"'Into Thy hands I commend my spirit, Thou hast redeemed me, O Lord of truth.' And so he ended."

A second notice of John Brown is found in a passage which Foxe inserts, out of its chronological order, towards the close of Henry VIII.'s reign (vol. v., 647-653), having found, it appears, new materials in the registers of Archbishop Warham. Nine articles of doctrine were presented to Brown and a number of other persons. Many denied them, and escaped ; but five, including Brown, were condemned and burned. The articles were the following :

(1.) That the sacrament of the altar was not the true and very body of Christ, but only material bread in substance.

(2.) That auricular confession was not to be made to a priest.

(3.) That no power is given of God to priests of ministering sacraments, saying mass, or other divine service, more than to laymen.

(4.) That the solemnization of matrimony is not necessary to the salvation of the soul, neither was instituted of God.

(5.) That the sacrament of extreme unction is not available, nor necessary to the soul's health.

(6.) That the images of the cross, of the crucifix, of the blessed Virgin, and other saints, are not to be worshipped ; and that those who worship them do commit idolatry.

(7.) That pilgrimages to holy places and holy relics be not necessary, nor meritorious to soul's health.

(8.) That invocation is not to be made to saints, but only to God, and that He only heareth their prayers.

(9.) That holy bread and holy water have no more virtue after their consecration than before.

It is not likely that the fourth of the above articles was a fair statement of the views of the accused persons. They may have denied that matrimony was a sacrament, or possibly that a religious ceremony performed by a priest was essential to the validity of marriage; but it is not credible that they should have denied the necessity of a marriage vow, or its inviolable character.

The date of these executions in the registers is A.D. 1511 in the third year of Henry VIII.'s reign.

*B.* According to the Church of Rome, the "holy souls" in purgatory are enduring the remainder of the "*temporal penalty*" due to their sins (the *eternal* penalty being remitted by Christ's merits, through the sacrament of penance); and this temporal penalty may be shortened by masses said on their behalf. In the mass the body and blood of Christ are said to be offered by the priest, as a sacrifice for the sins of the living and the dead.

This doctrine naturally became the parent of many and great legacies, bequeathed on the condition that the priests who enjoyed the benefit of them should say masses for the repose of the souls of the donors. It would appear that in England, before the Reformation, many priests obtained a livelihood, like the priest with whom John Brown argued, by saying (or singing) masses for departed souls.

In Chaucer's portrait of a good priest we have this passage :

"He set not his benefice to hire;  
Nor left his sheep encumbered in the mire  
And ran to London to St. Paul's,  
To seken him a chantry for souls."

C. The doctrine of Purgatory, and of its abbreviation by means of masses, labours under this defect, that there is no means of knowing (unless by some special revelation) how long the departed soul needs the help of its friends on earth. Masses may be said for a soul that no longer needs them ; or, on the other hand, masses may be discontinued whilst the soul supposed to be in Paradise is still in torment.

D. William Warham, according to Foxe, held the see of Canterbury for twenty-eight years. He died in 1532.

E. "John Brown," says Foxe, "had borne a faggot seven years before, in the days of King Henry VII."

F. Nowhere in the New Testament is the word *ιερεὺς*, answering to "priest," employed to designate any office in the Christian ministry. Christ is the High Priest of His people ; and all His true people are called priests, as offering the sacrifices of praise, thanksgiving, and obedience (Rom. xii. 1 ; Heb. xiii. 15, 16 ; 1 Pet. ii. 5, 9). But there is now no more offering for sin (Heb. x. 11—18) ; and, even when Paul carefully enumerates the various functions of the Christian ministry (1 Cor. xii. 28 ; Eph. iv. 11), there is no mention of priesthood. In the Roman Catholic Bible the word "priest" may be found applied to Christian ministers, but the word in the original is *πρεσβύτερος*, meaning "elder."

G. We have no record of what the archbishop said to John Brown ; but the language which I have attributed to him is in harmony with the position assumed by the priesthood of the Church of Rome, both then and now. The following passage is from W. Thorpe's own account of his examination before Thomas Arundel, Archbishop of Canterbury, in Saltwood Castle, A.D. 1407 :—

"And the archbishop said to those three clerks that stood before him, 'Lo, sirs, this is the manner and business of this

lewd losel, and such other, to pick out such sharp sentences of Holy Scripture and doctors, to maintain their sect and lore against the ordinance of holy Church. And therefore it is, losel, thou covetest to have again the Psalter that I made to be taken from thee at Canterbury ; to record sharp verses against us. But thou shalt never have that Psalter, nor none other book, till that I know that thy heart and mouth accord fully to be governed by holy Church."

*H.* Fisher, Bishop of Rochester, although a persecutor, was much superior in learning and piety to his contemporaries generally among the bishops and clergy of England. Burnet says of him that he was "in great esteem for piety and strictness of life;" and adds, "Henry VII. made him bishop of Rochester. He never would exchange that for any other. He said his church was his wife, and he would not part with his wife because she was poor."

He was one of the small party of conscientious Romanists who refused to disown the supremacy of the Pope in matters of religion, and to accept the supremacy of the king in its place ; and who thereby brought upon themselves the persecution of Henry VIII. Fisher was beheaded as a traitor for having spoken against the royal supremacy ; and although our sympathy for him is abated by the fact that he had been a stern persecutor himself, yet the account of his closing scene, as given by Burnet, warrants the hope that he died a true believer in the Lord Jesus.

The sincerity of the generality of the other prelates and clergy in submitting to Henry as their spiritual head may well be doubted, when we see that, with a few illustrious exceptions, the mass of the clergy, together with the Lords and Commons, returned to the Papal allegiance on the accession of Mary.

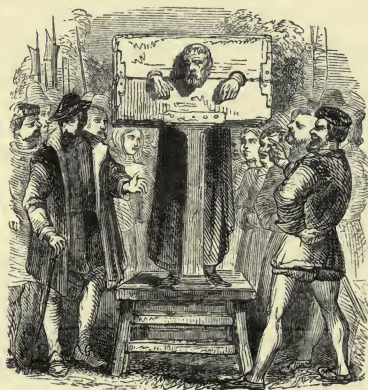
*I.* We must not suppose that *all* persecutors acted from motives of cruelty. It is only too true that good men have



been guilty of this error, and that persecution has been wrongly used in defending, as well as in opposing, the truth.

The error of supposing that heresy must be suppressed by civil penalties lingered long among Protestants. But they came at length to know better under the teaching of Scripture. But the Church of Rome is fixed immoveably in this, as in her other errors, by the dogma of infallibility.

A bull of Leo X., issued A.D. 1520, condemns forty-one propositions said to be taken from the writings of Luther, of which the thirty-third runs thus, "*It is against the will of the Holy Spirit that heretics should be burnt.*" Many Roman Catholics would no doubt, if free to think for themselves, approve of the proposition thus *condemned*. But if they were to say so they would come under the anathema of the Vatican council of 1870.





## WILLIAM TYNDALE.



Those who wish to study the history of William Tyndale under the most complete and accurate form in which it has yet appeared, should refer to the excellent work of the Rev. R. Demaus, published by the Religious Tract Society. There is also a very good notice of him in Canon Westcott's *History of the English Bible*.

A. From the time of Wickliff to that of Tyndale, a period of about one hundred and forty years, the Lollards, as Wickliff's followers were termed, had continued, in spite of fierce persecution, to read in secret the manuscript copies of the Bible (or portions of it) which they possessed, and to hold, more or less distinctly, the doctrines of the Gospel. In the year 1400, the English Parliament (in which the spiritual peers exercised an influence far exceeding any which they now possess) passed, to its own disgrace, an act for burning heretics, of which Sir W. Blackstone says, in his *Commentaries*: "The clergy, taking advantage from the king's dubious title to demand an increase of their own power, obtained an Act of Parliament which sharpened the edge of persecution to its utmost keenness. For by that statute, the diocesan alone, without the intervention of a synod, might convict of heretical tenets; and unless the convict abjured his opinions, or if after abjuration he relapsed, the sheriff was bound, *ex officio*, if required by the bishop, to commit the unhappy victim to the flames, without waiting for the consent of the crown."

The tremendous vigour with which some of the bishops

wielded the weapon thus put into their hands, may be seen in the extracts from the episcopal registers of more than one diocese preserved by Foxe and Strype. One extract from the register of Lincoln may suffice :

“John Scrivener, forced by his oath, did accuse the following persons . . . John Barret, goldsmith, of London, with Joan Barret, his wife, and Jude, his servant, because he, John Barret, was heard in his own house, before his wife and maid there present, to recite the Epistle of St. James, which epistle, with many other things, he had perfectly without book. Also Joan, his wife, because she lent to this John Scrivener the Gospels of St. Matthew and St. Mark, which book he gave to Bishop Smith.

“The aforesaid John Scrivener was also forced by his oath to accuse the following persons. . . . All these were accused, because, at the marriage of Durdant’s daughter, they assembled together in a barn, and heard a certain Epistle of St. Paul read, which epistle they well liked, but especially Durdant, and commended the same.”

John Scrivener himself was burnt by order of Bishop Longland, A.D. 1521, his own children being compelled to light the fire. (Foxe, edition by Rev. S. Cattley, vol. iv., pp. 228, 245.)

*B.* William Tyndale belonged to a Gloucestershire family, but the time and place of his birth are (as his biographer, the Rev. R. Demaus, has shown) uncertain. Foxe says that he was “brought up from a child in the University of Oxford,” where he acquired his knowledge of the Scriptures, whereunto he was singularly addicted, insomuch that he, lying then in Magdalen Hall, read privily to certain students and fellows of Magdalen College some parcel of divinity ; instructing them in the knowledge and truth of the Scriptures.” From Oxford he removed to Cambridge, after which “he resorted to one Master Welch, a knight of Gloucestershire, and was there schoolmaster to his children.” The

home of Sir John Welch (or Walsh) was at Little Sodbury, where the old manor-house stands in one of the beautiful hollows on the western declivity of the Cotswold range of hills.

*C.* In his Preface [to the translation of the Pentateuch, Tyndale gives this account of the motives which induced him to translate the New Testament :—"I had perceived by experience, how that it was impossible to establish the lay-people in any truth, except the Scripture were plainly laid before their eyes in their mother-tongue, that they might see the process, order, and meaning of the text. For else whatsoever truth is taught them, these enemies of all truth quench it again, partly with the smoke of their bottomless pit, whereof thou readest in Apocalypse, chap. ix. (that is, with apparent reasons of sophistry, and traditions of their own making, founded without ground of Scripture), and partly in juggling with the text."

*D.* Tonstal, Bishop of London, had the reputation of being a great friend of learning, and this induced Tyndale to hope that he might be allowed to translate the New Testament under the bishop's roof. But Tyndale found himself mistaken in the man; and after remaining about a year in London, he "understood at the last, not only that there was no room in my lord of London's palace to translate the New Testament, but also that there was no place to do it in all England."

*E.* Tyndale began to print his first edition of the New Testament at Cologne in 1525; but in the midst of the work an alarm was raised by a hostile Papist, who had got wind of it, and Tyndale, with his companion, Roye, made their escape, carrying with them what they could of the finished sheets. They then proceeded up the Rhine to Worms, where they carried on their work to completion. It is stated

by a German contemporary, Spalatin, that six thousand copies of the English Testament were printed at Worms. Tyndale was afterwards obliged to flee from Worms, and took up his residence successively at Marburg (where he printed the Pentateuch) and at Antwerp.

Tyndale's first edition of the New Testament appears to have been published about the beginning of 1526, and to have been circulated in England soon after. It is stated in Anderson's *Annals of the English Bible*, that more than twenty editions of Tyndale's New Testament were printed (by himself and by others), from the year 1526 to 1536, the year of his martyrdom.

*F.* Owing to the prohibition of the Scriptures, they could only be brought over concealed in other merchandise, and then circulated secretly, at the peril of all concerned. But so great was the demand that all risks were braved.

It is easy to conceive with what joy the persecuted Lollards who had been paying high prices for solitary Gospels or Epistles of their manuscript Scriptures, welcomed Tyndale's Testaments in English, which they could more easily understand than the antiquated dialect of Wickliff, and at a price which all but the very poor could afford to give.

*G.* It is no injustice to the Church of Rome to say that the doctrine of *peace with God* through the blood of Christ is *news* to the ordinary Roman Catholic. The Church of Rome allows that the sacrifice of Christ was sufficient to atone for the sins of the whole world ; but along with this she teaches that a certain amount of atonement must be performed by men for themselves. And a very large part of the Roman Catholic religion turns upon this denial of *full* and *free* forgiveness through Christ's blood. Penances, works of merit, indulgences, purgatory, and masses for the dead, are all based upon it. Practically speaking, that peace with God of which Paul says, " Being justified by faith, we

have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ," is a thing most imperfectly understood among Roman Catholics, as their own books testify. The following extract is from a little work upon the institution of the Carmelite scapular, and the advantages of wearing it ; approved by a prelate of the order :—

“ Consider now, Christian soul, upon the amount of *Divine wrath* reserved for you in the *next life*, even should the guilt of your sins have been effaced by contrition. *Think of the insufficiency of your atonement*—the neglect of such corporal austerities as would be *necessary to expiate your faults*—reflect on the inefficacy of your prayers, so often neglected, almost always said without attention or fervour. These wants must be supplied ; for the *avenging justice of God* will exact from the sinner, *even after justification, payment to the last farthing* of the debts contracted with him ; what an advantage is it not then for you to be able to *enter into participation of the merits of a chosen portion of Christ's Aock.*”

I beg the reader to observe the expressions which I have italicized, and to compare them with the language of Paul above quoted.

H. Tyndale was residing at Antwerp, in what was called the “English House,” under the protection of an English merchant named Poyntz, when he was arrested by the contrivance of a spy named Philips, and carried to the castle of Vilvorde, between Antwerp and Brussels. Here he lay in prison for more than a year and four months, and was executed, according to Foxe, on October 6th, 1536, being first strangled and then burnt, “crying thus at the stake with a fervent zeal and a loud voice, ‘Lord, open the King of England's eyes !’”

I. Before the end of the year 1536, Tyndale's New Testament was for the first time printed on English soil, and



that by the king's own printer. In the summer of the following year, an edition of the Bible in English was for the first time published by royal authority. In this edition the Pentateuch and the New Testament, and (it is generally believed) the books from Joshua to the Second of Chronicles, were of Tyndale's translation. The remainder was taken from the Bible which had been already published by Coverdale (but not licensed) in 1535. (Westcott's *History of the English Bible*.)

Notwithstanding more than one revision, our English Bible of the present day is substantially the same as it came from the hands of Tyndale.

*J.* Strongly as Romanism and Rationalistic Christianity are opposed, they have some points of agreement, one of which is that in both systems the Scripture is superseded and overridden by human authority. The Church of Rome tells us that the Bible is God's Word, but so are also the traditions of the Church, and that the Bible is of little use except when interpreted by the Church. Rationalism, on the other hand, says that Moses, Isaiah, Paul, etc., were doubtless inspired men ; but so also were Socrates, Mahomet, Shakespeare, and other great geniuses ; and further, that the Bible, like other books, must be subjected to the verifying faculty of our own understanding, by which its doctrines are to be tried, and the true separated from the false.

*Thus, in both cases, God's Word is set aside to make room for the word of men.* "WHAT IS THE CHAFF TO THE WHEAT? SAITH THE LORD. IS NOT MY WORD LIKE AS A FIRE? SAITH THE LORD; AND LIKE A HAMMER THAT BREAKETH THE ROCK IN PIECES?"



## ANNE ASKEW.



*A.* Anne Askew's martyrdom took place near the close of Henry the Eighth's reign. At this time England was no longer ecclesiastically subject to the Court of Rome; the King, Parliament, and Convocation having cast off the Papal Supremacy in 1534. But the king being made supreme in matters of religion, Henry acted the part both of king and pope to the nation; and, his views being still in the main accordant with those of the Church of Rome, a twofold persecution was carried on. Protestants were, on the one hand, put to death as heretics, and the few Roman Catholics who remained faithful to the Pope were exposed to the same fate for denying the royal supremacy.

In the meanwhile the mass of the nation, both clergy and laity, seemed willing to accept whatever doctrines and religious practices the sovereign might impose on them. They were wholly Roman Catholic in the beginning of Henry the Eighth's reign, half Protestant during the latter part of it, wholly Protestant under Edward VI., wholly Roman Catholic under Mary, and again wholly Protestant under Elizabeth, changing like weathercocks to the wind. The English martyrs of the sixteenth century deserve to be had in all honour; but nothing can be less glorious to the nation than its religious history during the same period.

*B.* Gardiner, Bishop of Winchester, although acknowledging the king's supremacy, in defence of which he wrote a book, was a bitter enemy of the Reformed doctrine, and a relentless persecutor of those who followed it, both under

Henry VIII. and Mary. Nor was the disgrace of a persecuting spirit counterbalanced in his case, as in that of some others, by uprightness and sincerity of character. Burnet says of him, "He had all the arts of insinuation and flattery, and was inferior to none in profound dissimulation;" also that, on his deathbed, "he expressed great sorrow for his former sins, and often said he had erred with Peter, but had not repented with him."

C. Her name is thus pronounced, and has been very generally spelt thus, but the more correct spelling seems to be Ayscough. She was second daughter of Sir William Ayscough, knight, of Kelsey, in Lincolnshire (Walter's *History of England*), and was married to a gentleman named Kyme, but is commonly known by her maiden name. "Her husband," says Burnet, "being a violent Papist, drove her out of his house, when he discovered her inclinations to the Reformation."

D. The downfall of Anne Boleyn in 1536, and of Thomas Cromwell, the prime minister, in 1540, enabled the Romish party to recover their ascendancy in the king's council, and to arrest for a while the progress of the Reformation. The Duke of Norfolk and Gardiner were the two leading men of this party. Under its influence Parliament passed, in 1539, the persecuting Act known as that of the Six Articles, by which it was made felony to write or speak against the following points:—(1.) That in the sacrament there was, after consecration, no substance of bread or wine, but only the natural body and blood of Christ. (2.) That the body and blood of Christ were entirely in the bread and in the wine; and that therefore communion in both kinds was unnecessary. (3.) That priests, by the law of God, ought not to marry. (4.) That vows of single life, made by man or woman advisedly, ought to be kept. (5.) That private masses were lawful and useful. (6.) That auricular confession was necessary, and ought to be retained.

The penalty for speaking against the first of these articles was to be burnt alive, with forfeiture of estates and goods to the Crown. Those who spoke against the five others were, for the first offence, subjected to forfeiture of property and imprisonment, and for the second, to death.

Persons charged with offences against this statute were to be tried before a commission appointed for each shire ; of which the archbishop or bishop, or commissary of the above, or chancellor of the diocese, was always to be one. It was under this Act that Anne Askew suffered.

*E.* In 1537, Henry VIII. was persuaded by Thomas Cromwell to license, for the first time, the publication of the Bible in English. Cranmer, writing to Cromwell to express his gratitude for this service rendered to the cause of God, says : " For this your pains taken in this behalf I give you my most hearty thanks, assuring your lordship, for the contentation of my mind, you have showed me more pleasure here than if you had given me a thousand pounds."—*Strype's Cranmer*, I. 115-122.

In 1538, " Injunctions " were addressed by the king to the clergy, of which the second and third ran thus :

" Item, that ye shall provide, on this side the feast of N. next coming, one book of the whole Bible of the largest volume in English, and the same set up in some convenient place within the said church, that ye have care of, where your parishioners may most commodiously resort to the same, and read it : the charges of which book shall be rateably borne between you, the parson, and the parishioners aforesaid ; that is to say, the one half by you, the other half by them.

" Item, that ye shall discourage no man, privily or overtly, from the reading of the said Bible."

" It was wonderful," says Strype, " to see with what joy this Book of God was received, not only among the learned sort, and those that were noted for lovers of the Reformation

but generally all England over, among all the vulgar and common people; and with what greediness God's Word was read, and what resort to all places where the reading of it was." He adds a story related by one William Malden, who was a boy at the time, to the effect "that when the king had allowed the Bible to be set forth to be read in all churches, immediately several poor men in the town of Chelmsford, in Essex, where his father lived and he was born, bought the New Testament, and on Sundays sat reading it in the lower part of the church. Many would flock about them to hear them reading; and he among the rest, being then but fifteen years old, came every Sunday to hear the glad and sweet tidings of the Gospel." He then goes on to tell how his father prevented him from doing this, and how he and his father's apprentice bought a New Testament for themselves to read in secret, and kept it hid under the bed-straw.

In 1543, the Romanizing party having gained strength, an Act of Parliament was passed by which the public reading of the Scripture was again prohibited to the laity, and even the reading of it in private was restricted to the upper classes; artificers, yeomen, labourers, etc., being forbidden the use of the book.

A curious memorial of this oppressive enactment is found in the following sentences written by a shepherd on a spare leaf of a book translated from a Latin work of Polydore Virgil: "On the Invention of Things: at Oxford, the yere 1546: browt down to Seynbury by John Darbye; price 14d. When I kepe Mr. Setymer's shype I bout thys boke, when the Testament was aberagatyn (abrogated) that shepherdys might not red it. I pray God amende that blyndnes. Writ by Robert Wyllyams, keppynge shepe upon Seynbury Hill." (Preface to Bagster's *English Hexapla*.)

In A. Askew's account of her examination before Bishop Bonner we read: "My friends told me if I did come to Lincoln, the priests would assault me, and put me to great

trouble, as thereof they had made their boast ; and when I heard it, I went thither indeed, not being afraid, because I knew my matter to be good. Moreover I remained there nine days to see what would be said to me. And as I was in the Minster, reading upon the Bible, they resorted unto me by two and two, by five and by six, minding to have spoken unto me, yet went they their ways again without words speaking."

*F.* The pyx is a vessel in which the consecrated host is kept, after mass is ended. In the time of Henry VIII. it used to be hung over the altar in English churches. One of the articles demanded by the rebels in Devonshire and Cornwall, in the time of Edward VI., was as follows : " We will have the sacrament hang over the high altar, and there to be worshipped as it was wont to be ; and they which will not thereto consent, we will have them die, like heretics against the holy Catholic faith."

Anne Askew says, " My belief which I wrote to the Council was this : That the sacramental bread was left us to be received with thanksgiving, in remembrance of Christ's death, the only remedy of our soul's recovery ; and that thereby we also receive the whole benefits and fruits of His most glorious passion. Then would they needs know whether the bread in the box were God or no. I said, God is a Spirit, and will be worshipped in spirit and in truth. Then they demanded, Will you plainly deny Christ to be in the sacrament ? I answered that I believe faithfully the eternal Son of God not to dwell there ; in witness whereof I recited again the history of Bel, Dan. xiv. (from the apocryphal addition to Daniel), Acts vii. and xvii., and Matt. xxiv. (verse 26) ; concluding thus, I neither wish death, nor yet fear his might ; God have the praise thereof with thanks."

Again, referring to her final examination at the Guildhall, she says : " Then would they needs know if I would deny



the sacrament to be Christ's body and blood. I said, "Yea, for the same Son of God that was born of the Virgin Mary is now glorious in heaven, and will come again from thence at the latter day as He went up. And as for that ye call your God, it is a piece of bread. For a more proof thereof (mark it when ye list), let it but lie in the box three months, and it will be mouldy, and so turn to nothing that is good. Whereupon I am persuaded that it cannot be God."

The doctrine that Christ is contained whole and entire, body and blood, soul and divinity, in every consecrated host leads to all kinds of conclusions degrading to the majesty of God, and which *ought* to be revolting to every pious mind. Directions are given by the Church of Rome to her priests as to what should be done if the consecrated host should be carried away by an animal (a mouse), and cannot be found ; or should be vomited by the priest who has just received it ; or should have begun to be corrupted at the time when it is consecrated. "Thou wilt not suffer Thine Holy One to see corruption," said David, speaking in prophecy of Christ (Psa. xvi. 10).

G. The examination of Anne Askew by torture seems to have been between her condemnation at the Guildhall and her execution. She says : "On Tuesday I was sent from Newgate to the sign of the Crown ; where Master Rich and the Bishop of London (Bonner), with all their power and flattering words, went about to persuade me from God ; but I did not esteem their glaring pretences. Then came there to me Nicholas Shaston, and counselled me to recant as he had done. I said to him that it had been good for him never to have been born ; with many other like words.

"Then Master Rich sent me to the Tower, where I remained till three o'clock. Then came Rich and one of the council, charging me upon my obedience to shew unto them if I knew any man or woman of my sect. My answer was that I knew none. Then they asked me of my lady of Suffolk,



my lady of Sussex, my lady of Hertford, my lady Denny, and my lady Fitzwilliam. To whom I answered, If I should pronounce anything against them that I were not able to prove it . . . Then did they put me on the rack, because I confessed no ladies or gentlemen to be of my opinion, and thereon they kept me a long time ; and because I lay still and did not cry, my lord chancellor and Master Rich took pains to rack me with their own hands till I was nigh dead.

“Then the lieutenant caused me to be loosed from the rack. Incontinently I swooned, and then they recovered me again. After that I sat two long hours reasoning with my lord chancellor upon the bare floor ; where he, with many flattering words, persuaded me to leave my opinion. But my Lord God (I thank His everlasting goodness) gave me grace to persevere, and will do, I hope, to the very end.

“Then was I brought home, and laid in a bed with as weary and painful bones as ever had patient Job. I thank my Lord God therefor. Then my lord chancellor sent me word, if I would leave my opinion, I should want nothing ; if I would not, I should forthwith to Newgate, and so be burned. I sent him again word that I would rather die than break my faith.”

Foxe adds to this narrative that Sir Anthony Knevet, the lieutenant of the Tower, “commanded his jailor to pinch her with the rack. Which being done as much as he thought sufficient, he went about to take her down, supposing that he had done enough. But Wriothesley, the chancellor, not contented that she was loosed so soon, confessing nothing, commanded the lieutenant to strain her on the rack again ; which because he denied to do, tendering the weakness of the woman, he was threatened therefor grievously of the said Wriothesley, saying that he would signify his disobedience to the king. And so consequently upon the same, he and Master Rich, throwing off their gowns, would needs play the tormentors themselves.”

When Rich and Wriothsesley left the Tower, they returned on horseback to the court : but the lieutenant, going by water, had arrived there before them, and telling his story to Henry, had secured his pardon.

*H.* "There was at the same time also burned together with her, one Nicholas Belenian, a priest of Shropshire ; John Adams, a tailor ; and John Lascels, gentleman of the court and household of King Henry."—*Foxe*.

A gentleman named John Loud, quoted by Strype, who witnessed the burning, says : " I was with Lascels, Sir George Blagge, and the other ; and with me three of the Throk-mortons ; Sir Nicolas being one, and Mr. Kellum the other. By the same token that one unknown to me said, Ye are all marked that come to them. Take heed to your lives. Mr. Lascels, a gentleman of a right worshipful house of Gatford in Nottinghamshire, nigh Worsop, mounted up into the window of the little parlour by Newgate, and there sat, and by him Sir George. Mr. Lascels was merry and cheerful in the Lord, coming from hearing his sentence of condemnation." (Strype, *Ecc. Mem.*, I., i. 599.)

Foxe gives a letter written by John Lascelles in prison, stating at length his belief respecting the Lord's Supper. It ends thus : " Now, with quietness, I commit the whole world to their Pastor and Herdsman, Jesus Christ, the only Saviour and true Messiah : and I commend my sovereign lord and master, the king's majesty, King Henry VIII., to God the Father and to our Lord Jesus Christ ; the Queen and my lord the Prince, with this whole realm, ever to the innocent and immaculate Lamb ; that His blood may wash and purify their hearts and souls from all iniquity and sin ; to God's glory and the salvation of their souls. I do protest that the inward part of my heart doth groan for this ; and I doubt not but to enter into the holy tabernacle which is

above ; yea, and there to be with God for ever. Farewell in Christ Jesu.

“John Lacels, late servant to the king, and now I trust to serve the everlasting King with the testimony of my blood in Smithfield.”

I. “Then Wriothesley, lord chancellor, sent to Anne Askew letters, offering to her the king’s pardon if she would recant ; who, refusing once to look upon them, made this answer again, that she came not thither to deny her Lord and Master. Then were the letters likewise offered to the others, who, in like manner, following the constancy of the woman, denied not only to receive them, but also to look upon them. Whereupon the Lord Mayor commanding fire to be put unto them, cried with a loud voice, *Fiat justitia.*”—*Foxe.*

The date of this martyrdom is said, in Stowe’s *Annals*, to have been July 16, 1546.



## HUGH LATIMER.



A. HUGH LATIMER, one of the greatest and noblest of the Reformers of the sixteenth century, born at Thurcaston in Leicestershire, was made bishop of Worcester (then including Gloucester and Bristol) under Henry VIII., A.D. 1535. He resigned his episcopate four years later, when the reactionary party passed the cruel Act of the "Six Articles." Subsequently he was imprisoned in the Tower till Henry's death, 1547. On the accession of Edward VI. he was released, but refused to resume the episcopal office. He was therefore appointed one of the special preachers licensed by royal authority to preach in any part of the kingdom; for which service his eloquence, fervour, and courage in reproving sin eminently fitted him.

Mary having succeeded her brother upon his early death, July 6th, 1553, the Church of Rome was not long in regaining mastery of England. Latimer was brought before the Queen's Council on September 13th, and was by them committed to the Tower, along with Ridley and Cranmer. In March, 1554, the three were conveyed to Oxford; and the next month tried before a commission, which sat in St. Mary's Church. Being condemned as heretics, they were kept in confinement at Oxford till October 16th, 1555, when Latimer and Ridley were burnt alive in one fire; Cranmer being reserved till March 21, 1556, when he suffered in the same way.

Those who wish for further acquaintance with Latimer's history will do well to consult either Foxe's *Book of Martyrs*, or the excellent biography of Latimer edited by the Rev. R. Demaus, and published by the Religious Tract Society.

B. In 1533, a bill was passed by both Houses of Parliament, abolishing the Papal Supremacy, and transferring the supremacy, in ecclesiastical as well as civil causes, to the Crown ; and to this measure Convocation gave consent. "The clergy," says Mr. Demaus, "were helpless to oppose these sweeping changes. The people had ceased to dread their spiritual censures ; and all classes of society had suffered too much from them, in the arrogance of their prosperity, to feel sympathy for them in their humiliation. Stifling their rage and indignation as best they could, they had to assume the appearance of submission and acquiescence. For the dignified clergy who sat in Convocation, a more bitter degradation was in store. Like the disgraced ministers of an Oriental despot, they were compelled to commit official suicide, and by their own acts to terminate their authority. The all-important question, whether the Bishop of Rome had, by Scripture, any more jurisdiction within the realm of England than any other foreign bishop—a question which went to the root of all the Papal pretensions—was submitted to Convocation, and was decided by an immense majority against the Papal claims. In the Lower House, four members only were bold enough to vote in favour of the Pope's proud pretensions."

"In June a peremptory proclamation appeared, commanding all bishops and clergy to preach every Sunday, that the style, title, and jurisdiction of Supreme Head, so long usurped by the Pope, appertaineth only to our crown and dignity royal. . . . And lest this duty should be evaded, all loyal subjects were required to observe whether the clergy complied with the proclamation."—*Life of Latimer*, pp. 173, 174, 179.

It is no wonder that a body of men who renounced the Papal authority, not in obedience to their own consciences, but to the king's order, should have returned willingly to their old allegiance when the accession of Mary opened the way for it.



C. The Parliament were no doubt more sincere than the clergy in repudiating the Papal supremacy. But their subsequent conduct proved that conscientious motives had as little part in the one case as in the other. For within a year and a half after Mary's accession, they retraced their steps. "Both houses," says Burnet, "agreed on an address to the king and queen, that they would intercede with the legate to reconcile them to the see of Rome ; and they offered to repeal all the laws they had made against the Pope's authority in sign of their repentance." This address was presented to Philip and Mary "in the great chamber of the court at Westminster," the legate (Cardinal Pole) being also present, by the Lords and Commons, "all kneeling on their knees." The king and queen having presented this petition to the legate, he solemnly absolved the Parliament and the whole nation from the guilt and penalty of schism, by authority of "the most holy Lord Pope, Julius the Third."

One reservation, however, in this submission is worthy of notice. The renunciation of the Papal authority had been most profitable to numbers of the nobility and gentry, on whom Church and Abbey lands had been bestowed by the Crown. According to the theory of the Church of Rome, a true repentance would have involved the restitution of these lands, and absolution should not have been given without it. But, compliant as the Parliament were in matters of faith, upon the question of property they stood firm ; and the legate (authorized, no doubt, by the Pope) thought it more prudent not to insist.

D. The Church of Rome allows that the value of Christ's atonement was sufficient to expiate the guilt of the whole world. But she destroys the value of this admission by teaching that for sins committed after baptism there is a twofold penalty, the eternal and the temporal. The former of these is said to be remitted in the sacrament of penance, by virtue of Christ's merits thus conveyed ; but the temporal



penalty remains to be cleared off by various means. These means are good works, almsgiving, penances, sufferings patiently endured, etc. ; also the innumerable observances by which indulgences may be gained. After this life the process is continued by the sufferings of purgatory ; also by masses for the dead, and meritorious works applied to the benefit of the departed, by which the sufferings of purgatory are supposed to be abridged. (See "Tyndale," Note G, p. 108.)

Purgatory, it must be remembered, is not defined to be a place for purifying souls from any remains of a *sinful disposition* (for they are said to be perfectly holy already), but for expiating *guilt* contracted on earth. When the whole of the temporal penalty has been discharged, the soul is released from purgatory, and not before.

It is evident that this doctrine prevents the penitent from rejoicing as he ought in the forgiving mercy of God, and in the atoning merits of Christ ; and turns his attention to the question how he may best, by his own performances and merits, clear off the debt which he supposes still to lie upon him. How different from this is the language of the Gospel in such passages as the following : "I, even I, am He that blotteth out thy transgressions for Mine own sake, and will not remember thy sins" (Isa. xliii. 25). "I will forgive their iniquity, and will remember their sin no more" (Jer. xxxi. 34, and Heb. x. 15-22). "Therefore being justified by faith we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Rom. v. 1). "There is therefore now no condemnation to them that are in Christ Jesus" (Rom. viii. 1). "The blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanseth us from all sin" (1 John i. 7).

E. Burnet, speaking of Edward's death, says : "All people concluded that the sins of England must have been very great, since they provoked God to deprive the nation of so signal a blessing as the rest of his reign would have, by all appearance, proved. Ridley, and the other good men of that time, made great lamentations of the vices that were

grown then so common, that men had passed all shame in them. Luxury, oppression, and a hatred of religion, had overrun the higher rank of people, who gave a countenance to the Reformation merely to rob the Church ; but by that and their other practices were become a great scandal to so good a work. The inferior sort were too much in the power of the priests (who were still, notwithstanding their outward compliance, Papists in heart), and were so much offended at the spoil they saw made of all good endowments, without putting other and more useful ones in their room, that they, who understood little of religion, laboured under great prejudices against everything that was advanced by such tools."

The mass of the nation had in fact never given more than a nominal adhesion to the doctrines of the Gospel up to the time of Edward's death. Most of them were in all probability grossly ignorant of Scripture truth, and even those who had some theoretical acquaintance with it were at heart governed by "the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, and the pride of life;" and were consequently ready to be of any religion which their worldly interests seemed to require. But for the sake of the faithful remnant, and for His own mercy's sake, God wonderfully delivered the country from its perils again and again.

*F.* The marriage of Mary with Philip II. of Spain, that giant among persecutors, was full of evil forebodings for the Protestant cause, both in England and on the Continent. But God in mercy brought to an end the ill-omened alliance by the death of Mary, leaving no children, within four years and a half after his marriage.

*G.* John Rogers, the first martyr of Mary's reign, was burnt alive in Smithfield, February 4th, 1555. He had been chaplain to the English merchants at Antwerp, and was made a prebend of St. Paul's by Ridley, under Edward VI. He is said by Foxe to have been brought to the knowledge of the Gospel by intercourse with W. Tyndale and Miles

Coverdale at Antwerp ; and to him is ascribed the work of editing the English Bible in which Tyndale's half-completed version of the Old Testament, along with his New Testament, were embodied.

John Hooper was made Bishop of Gloucester under Edward VI., in 1550, the diocese of Worcester being added to his charge two years later. Foxe praises him highly for his piety and diligence. "No father in his household," he says, "no gardener in his garden, nor husbandman in his vineyard, was more or better occupied, than he in his diocese, amongst his flock, going about his towns and villages in teaching and preaching to the people there." And again : "If you entered into the bishop's palace, you would suppose yourself to have entered into some church or temple. In every corner thereof there was some smell of virtue, good example, honest conversation, and reading of Holy Scriptures." Hooper was burnt, February 9th, 1555, in his own cathedral city of Gloucester, in the midst of a weeping crowd.

Laurence Saunders, educated at Eton and King's College, Cambridge, became in course of time the incumbent of All-Hallows' Church, in Bread Street, London. He was arrested by order of Bonner, his diöcesan, early in the reign of Mary ; and, after a long imprisonment, was condemned and burned at Coventry, the day before Hooper suffered, February 8th. When at the place of execution, "he fell to the ground and prayed ; he rose up again, and took the stake to which he should be chained in his arms and kissed it, saying, 'Welcome, the cross of Christ ! welcome, everlasting life !'"

Rowland Taylor suffered the same day as Hooper, February 9th. He was rector of Hadleigh, in Suffolk, and was burned on Aldham Common, near that town. He was tried and condemned in London, and taken down to Hadleigh on horseback, his head being covered with a hood to prevent recognition. Arrived on the common, and seeing a crowd, he asked what place it was, and being told, he exclaimed, "Thanked be God, I am even at home," and so alighted

from his horse, and with both his hands rent the hood from his head. But when the people saw his reverend and ancient face, with a long white beard, they burst out with weeping tears, and cried, saying, "God save thee, good Dr. Taylor ; Jesus Christ strengthen thee ; the Holy Ghost comfort thee ;" with such other like godly wishes." When the fire was lighted, he cried, "Merciful Father, for Jesus Christ my Saviour's sake, receive my soul into Thy hands." For further particulars respecting the lives of these martyrs, and their courage and constancy in death, see Foxe's narrative.

*H.* Edward died in the sixteenth year of his age. It was his misfortune to be under the tutelage of unworthy statesmen. But, as Mr. Demaus says, "his genuine and unaffected piety, his amiable disposition, his attention to religious duties, his care for the poor, his anxious wish to benefit his subjects, endeared him to his countrymen ; and they lamented his death as the Jews had mourned the premature death of Josiah." "A few moments before his death," says Burnet, "he prayed earnestly that God would take him out of this wretched life, and committed his spirit to Him. He interceded very fervently for his subjects, that God would preserve England from popery, and maintain His true religion among them. Soon after that he breathed out his innocent soul, being in Sir Henry Sidney's arms."

*I.* John Lambert was converted by Thomas Bilney, by whom Latimer also was converted. He was afterwards chaplain to the English house at Antwerp (before the time of Rogers), but was arrested and conveyed to London, to be tried on a charge of heresy. Having been subsequently released, he was again arraigned before Cranmer, who was at that time himself but imperfectly enlightened ; Lambert appealed to the king, and, at Gardiner's suggestion, Henry VIII. took the extraordinary step of trying the accused in person, having Cranmer, Gardiner, and eight other bishops as his assessors. Lambert defended himself nobly and skilfully ; but was



condemned upon the charge of denying the bodily presence of Christ in the sacrament. He was burned at Smithfield, Nov. 20th, 1538. When half consumed he was raised up by his executioners upon their halberts, as far as the chain would allow. "Then he, lifting up such hands as he had, cried unto the people in these words: 'None but Christ! none but Christ!' and so, being let down again from the halberts, fell into the fire, and there ended his life."

*J.* John Frith a young man of great ability and learning, took his bachelor's degree at Cambridge, and was one of several men selected from that university to become fellows in Wolsey's new College of Christ Church, Oxford. Foxe tells us that he was converted by means of Tyndale; and he had not long been at Oxford when he was arrested, along with other students, for having in their possession heretical books including some of Tyndale's Testaments. Frith was, however, soon after released, by Wolsey's desire; and went abroad to join Tyndale, and laboured with him at Marburg. Tyndale speaks of him as his dearest friend. Having ventured back to England, he was arrested, tried, and condemned; and was burnt in one fire with Andrew Hewet, an apprentice, July 4th, 1533.

*K.* Foxe, referring to the time of Latimer's imprisonment, says, upon the authority of Augustine Bernher, Latimer's pious and devoted Swiss servant: "In prayer he was fervently occupied; wherein oftentimes he continued so long kneeling that he was not able to rise without help; and amongst other things there were three principal matters he prayed for: first, that as God had appointed him to be a preacher of His Word, so He would give him grace to stand to His doctrine unto his death, that he might give his heart-blood for the same. Secondly, that God of His mercy would restore His Gospel to England once again. The third principal matter wherewith in his prayers he was occupied, was to pray for the preservation of the Queen's Majesty that now

is [Elizabeth], whom in his prayers accustomably he was wont to name, and even with tears desired God to make her a comfort to this comfortless realm of England."

When four more years were passed all these prayers had been fulfilled.

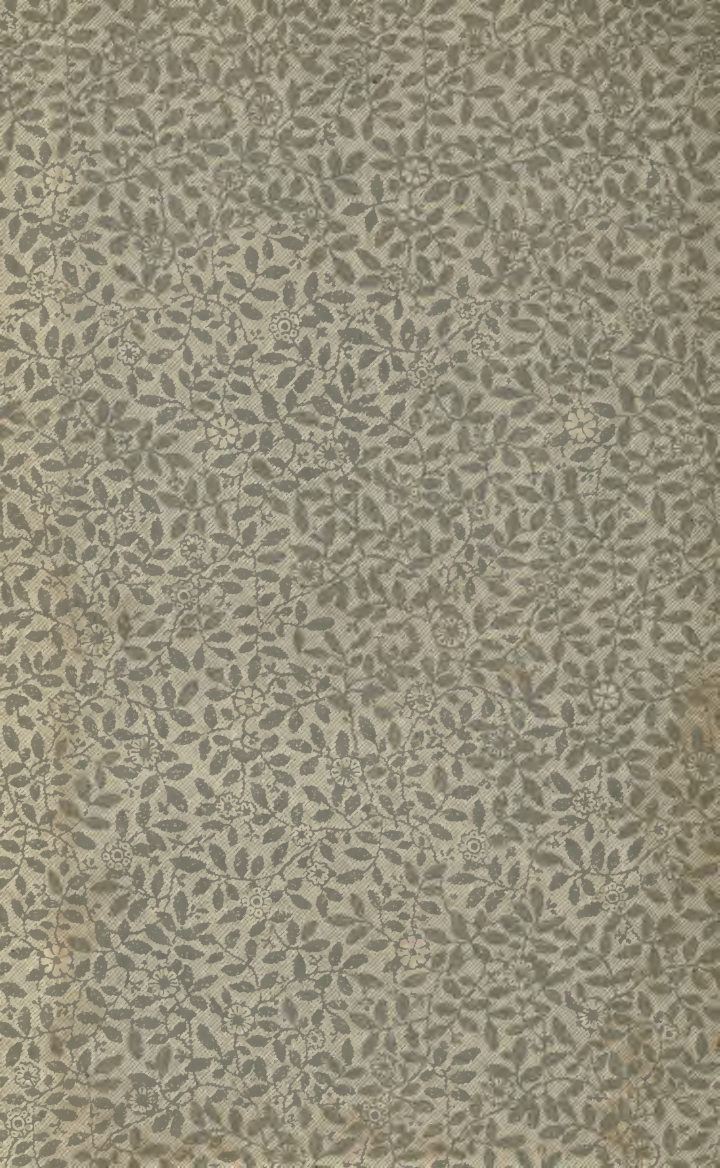
*L.* Till nearly forty years of age Latimer was a devout and zealous Roman Catholic ; and, as such, building his hopes on grounds of false confidence. "I have thought in times past," he said, "that if I had been a friar, and in a cowl, I could not have been damned nor afraid of death." Thomas Bilney, who had, like Latimer, been vainly seeking for peace in such ways, was brought into the light by meeting, in Cranmer's Latin Testament, with Paul's words, "This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners ; of whom I am chief." He imparted to Latimer the truth which he had found ; and the two became bosom friends. A place in Cambridge where they often walked together acquired the name of the "Heretics' Hill."

At his last examination in Oxford, September 28, 1555, the third article objected to him was, "That you openly affirmed that the mass is no propitiatory sacrifice for the quick and the dead." To which he answered : "No, no, my lord. Christ made one perfect sacrifice for all the whole world ; neither can any man offer Him again, neither can the priest offer up Christ again for the sins of men, which He took away by offering Himself once for all, as St. Paul saith, upon the cross ; neither is there any propitiation for our sins, saving His cross only."

*M.* Latimer's words to Ridley when the fire was lighted are well known : "Be of good comfort, Master Ridley, and play the man. We shall this day light such a candle by God's grace in England, as I trust shall never be put out."









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